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REPORT FROM THE EDITOR

Dudley Hoys—rushing rivers and rugged fells are his inspiration

AMONG the jagged fells of upper Eskdale in south west Cumberland, sixty people, 3,500 sheep and a few scattered farms inspire the Lakeland stories that pour from the pen of Dudley Hoys like the River Esk in spate. The river starts near wild Scafell, rushes down the dale past the farm where Hoys lives, past the little church of Boot village, on to the Irish Sea at Ravenglass. Says Hoys: "One Sunday I walked beside the river to the church in comfort, but by the end of the service the river was washing the church steps. It had risen six and a half feet in ninety minutes."

This change of mood is typical of a district that Hoys has lovingly described in countless thousands of words—his fifty-fourth JOHN BULL story appears on page 7.

Born on the Kent-Sussex border, Hoys fought in the first World War, took up writing while still in the army—"as a relief from boredom," he says—and then became a professional writer. He rejoined the army in the second World War, and settled in Eskdale ten years ago.

A weather-tanned bachelor of fifty-nine, Hoys farms, walks the fells, lectures—he is chairman of the Cumberland Literary Society—and takes a part in most activities from young farmers' clubs to the local dramatic group. Also—a penalty for owning the telephone at the head of the dale—he is called upon to lead rescue teams in searches for lost hikers.

"Recently," he says, "a car was found abandoned on the Hardknott Pass, which soars up a 1-in-3 gradient over into Dunnerdale. It took us three days of scrambling to find the driver's body."

FOR Clive Uptton—the illustrator of Gerald Pawle's series about the navy's wartime inventing team (*Wizards at War*, page 20)—there was never any question of a career outside art. His father is an artist, and when Uptton left school he studied in turn at three art schools. "I left the third," he says, "without regrets, when the pressure of commissions grew so great that I had no more time to spend on study."

Now, at forty-five, Uptton works in concentrated bursts. For three or four days at a time he will stay at Wickford, in Essex, painting from eleven in the morning right round to four or five the next morning. He often eats a meal at 1 a.m.

Much of the rest of his time Uptton spends in London, "mixing work and pleasure." His recreations are golf ("left-handed, enthusiastic and bad"), chess and shove halfpenny.

Uptton himself remembers the hush-hush with which the Admiralty cloaked the work of the naval scientists of whom Pawle writes. Towards the end of the war the Admiralty asked him for a picture showing the Allies storming the beaches of Europe. It was designed for exhibition in factories to boost the pre-invasion production drive. "Everyone was very keen to help me," he says, "except the Admiralty itself. It was reluctant to release any information on the very subject it had asked me to paint."

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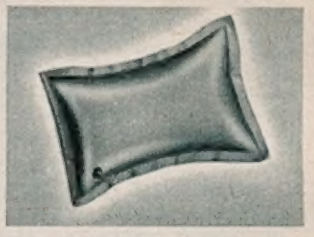

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Yes, my tip about Phillips certainly paid off. Especially having them fitted when the shoes are new.
All our shoes last longer now - and stay much smarter-looking, too.
Take it from me— PHILLIPS double the life of your shoes

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Free Speech

● Spoiled—by prosperity ● Dream homes—or nightmares?

● Clocking in for culture

SEVERAL years ago, a friend and I, touring Spain, discovered a picturesque and primitive fishing village on the Costa Brava. We stayed at the only hotel, which was very plain but quite comfortable, and my friend was so charmed by the village that he never forgot it.

This year we went back, to find the village modernized, with many luxurious hotels, shops, electricity and a piped water supply. My friend was keenly disappointed, and spoke angrily about how tourists had "spoiled" the village. I did not agree, and pointed out that commercialization had brought prosperity to the formerly poverty-stricken local people, and that now they all had the simple comforts we ourselves had enjoyed on our previous visit.

Yet I must admit that I readily fell in with his suggestion to pack our bags and move farther down the coast —in search of a village that was still unspoiled.—E. J. N., Birmingham.

Reminders

It was once the custom for Lanarkshire farmers to give their children animal ornaments for the mantelpiece when they married. They were called "Bear" and "Forbear," symbolizing the attitude young people should adopt to marriage—a message for many couples today. — A. R. SCOTT, Hamilton, Lanarkshire.

Points Of View

I have been house hunting for the past two years. Having read through several hundred circulars from agents I suggest that an annual award should be made for the most tactfully worded description of a property.

In many estate agents' offices there must be literary geniuses, but their efforts are rapidly producing a

race of hardened cynics. The "genuine rustic cottage overlooking a picturesque stream" is really a tumbledown shack leaning dangerously over a rushing mill-race; "in excellent repair throughout" means that the last owner has patched everything up beautifully; and "spacious rooms" should often read on: "(for the thin bachelor who doesn't suffer from claustrophobia)."—J. D. L., Chingford, E.4.

Sun Sneezes

Whenever I look directly at the sun I sneeze, and continue to do so for as long as I look. Several people I have spoken to have had the same experience.—F. LANGLEY, Sidcup, Kent.

"Some people are allergic to the sun, and this particularly affects their eyes, which water in strong sunlight," says a doctor. "Sneezing usually follows. There is no remedy—sufferers should keep out of the sun as much as possible or wear dark glasses."

Time In Hand

An Arab friend who was spending a holiday at my home watched me practising shorthand recently. He was quick to comment on the similarity in style between shorthand and written Arabic.

It struck me then that there are immense possibilities here. Shorthand, which is now taught in many state schools, could in a generation entirely replace our wasteful, complicated alphabet. By this method, none of the beauties of English would be lost, but the time taken to record it would be cut down tremendously.

I am only an average shorthand writer, but even I can do one hundred and twenty words a minute—about five times as fast as I can comfortably write words. — B. S. J., Northern Ireland.

Acting Up

My wife, whose work as an actress takes her away from home quite frequently, was most insistent before we married that I should be able to look after myself.

We have been married for three months now, during which time she

has been away several times. The first time she came back, she asked anxiously how I had got on. "Fine," I said brightly, and then to my astonishment she went into a sulk, saying "You don't seem to need me at all."

Now, on the day she is due back, I carefully leave my bed unmade, the washing up untouched, cigarette ash all over the carpets, and the living-room in near-chaos—to make her feel "needed."—B. L. T., Surrey.

Slaves To Efficiency

In Britain we seem to be moving towards the belief that the only valid kind of discipline is that applied externally by some kind of "authority" ("Free Speech," June 2) in the interests of "efficiency," to which everything must be sacrificed.

Two things are happening. More and more, a man's daily work is being separated from his home and family life; and the factory is encroaching more and more into private life and taking a man over, through the provision of every kind of social and cultural facility—in some cases even organizing his worship for him.

Perhaps there is truth in the cynic's remark that "men and women are so much like sheep that to eat mutton is almost cannibalism."—REVEREND J. CATTERICK, Ashwell Rectory, Baldock, Hertfordshire.

Bible Style

While church services can be popular on television, the B.B.C. infuriates me by flashing on the screen the words of hymns whose references to Jesus Christ, such as He, Him and Thou, are given small initial letters instead of capitals. — J. OLIVER, Cypress Road, Redcar, Yorkshire.

The B.B.C. says: "The style we follow is taken from the Bible, in which all references to Jesus Christ have small initial letters."

Third Party Dogs

The law wisely provides that before a vehicle is licensed the owner must insure against the claims of any person he may injure. Statistics, however, show that an alarmingly high proportion of accidents are caused by dogs straying on to the road; and it is often the motorist who is injured. But although he may be disabled for life, it is rarely any use for the driver to bring an action for damages, as the dog owner is unable to make adequate recompense. We should follow Switzerland's example and insist on third party insurance before a dog licence is issued.—C. FAIRCHILD, Harefield Avenue, Bedford.

On Their Mettle

Recently, I came across a pigeon's nest which had been constructed entirely of wire and other metal materials such as hairpins and hairclips, safety pins and nails.—H. AYRES, Lytham St. Anne's, Lancs.

"This is quite usual if pigeons find this sort of material," says an ornithologist. "They have an instinct to use twigs and stems, which are hard and springy. But if they come across wire, which they recognize as being stronger, they will use it in preference to the twigs."

John Bull pays one guinea for each letter published in "Free Speech," and at the usual rates for photographs. Readers with problems (other than medical) should write to the John Bull Free Advice Service, whose experts answer questions by post

THE COVER

EATING ice-cream at the seaside is a chain reaction. Just let one small girl go cavorting with a cornet, and the most jaded of beachcombers will rush to join the queue. For it's hard to ignore the heat when a six-year-old siren can make licking fourpennyworth of carbohydrates seem like a banquet on an iceberg. But at the seaside, of all places, there's no real need for ice-cream to cool off when there's all that water only a few yards away. Petts's cover couple should ask the salesman what he thinks. He looks as if he would be only too pleased to go and jump in the sea.

Whatever the pleasure
Player's complete it

Player's Please

IT'S THE TOBACCO THAT COUNTS

[NCC.29]

A film star? Never. A soldier? Once.
An explorer? In a manner of speaking . . .
An artist? Certainly! . . .
and a most designing individual.
What's more, a man with a reputation
for understanding the good things of life.
Let's have a word with him.

Sir! Will you join us in a small glass of something?

Why, thank you. I will. Not too small, if you don't mind . . . and not too strong.

A dry Martini?

This morning I feel more inclined to a straight vermouth—shall we say a Martini Dry. And I'll take it, if I may, in a large glass. You can't appreciate a first-rate vermouth in thimblefuls.

That's an interesting answer.
We'll have the same. Nothing with it?

Coldness—a good barman provides that free! And an olive by all means. The colour of an olive tones well with the Martini. The flavour of an olive doesn't quarrel with the subtleties in the glass. Settings are important. I wouldn't, for instance, drink even a Martini from a chipped china mug.

But, china mugs apart . . . ?

There's no better drink in the wide world than Martini, dry or sweet. You can quote Hardy Amies on that.

Better drink

MARTINI

Sweet or Dry

I loved Susan. For her, I must rescue the son she kept tied to her . . .

APRON STRINGS

by ***DUDLEY HOYS***

IT was in the Easter holidays and just before lambing time when I took young Peter Craig to see the peregrine's nest. He was a curious boy, shy, polite, small-boned, with fair hair and blue eyes. At schoolwork, I gathered, he was above the average for his age, which was twelve. On the other hand, there was more than a touch of the nursery about him.

We plugged up the fell towards Mart Crag, the dead bracken stems snapping beneath our feet. Presently, as we reached the more barren fell breast scantily pricked by last year's bents, I said: "Quietly, now. Don't want to scare 'em away."

An excited smile curved the boy's mouth. It stayed there until we clawed our way round a rocky spur. Then I heard the shrill intake of his breath and saw him flinch.

I knew what was wrong. We were looking down a steepness of fifteen hundred feet and his imagination was playing the devil with him.

My fingers closed on his arm. "Nothing to be afraid of. One foot there . . . the other there. That's right. Now grab that leaf of rock and you're past the drop. Don't look down."

We were clear of the awkward spot. I whispered: "The nest's thirty feet below that boulder in front. You'll get a first-class view."

He moved on cautiously and reached the boulder. What he saw must have given him

Above that drop of fifteen hundred feet I saw Peter flinch. "There's nothing to be afraid of," I said, closing my fingers over his arm

ILLUSTRATED BY GEORGE DITTON

We were to blame. The boys were helpless, adrift in a cockleshell boat. And Peter had not wanted to go

a great thrill, for his eyes were shining; and this time his smile had a strange, tender quality, more fitted to a mother with her babe than a schoolboy.

I gave him five minutes, while the chill wind ruffled about us, and wondered what private fears he must have suffered in his first term at boarding school. I thought what a pity it was that he was an only child and that his mother, Susan Craig, was a widow.

I had adored Susan since her own childhood when she was just the same slim, fascinating, wilful creature as now. To my cost, she looked on me merely as a brother. She married a Fleet Air Arm pilot during the war and lost him four years later in an air crash.

She settled in the south after that, returning to these parts only a couple of years ago. Since then my hopes had risen. But I'm not the sort that can sweep a woman off her feet, and at times I felt like a clumsy intruder into her private grief. . . .

PETER'S foot scraped on a bit of scree. The female peregrine swung out from the nest and hung suspended in the air, crying an angry *kek-kek-kek*. Beyond the hovering peregrine the distant fells were giants, vague, silver-blue, looming vastly over the hazy, dawning emerald of the lower lands.

Peter said: "Isn't it beautiful up here? I wish it weren't so wild and lonely."

That second remark worried me. Too much imagination is a dangerous handicap to a young lad. It had made him so timid that he was scared of a hard cricket ball, terrified of the dark, and over-ready to cry at the slightest frustration or if anybody spoke to him sharply. He needed a father to jolly him along in a rough-and-ready fashion.

That thought, maybe, was partly selfish, for I longed to make his mother my wife. But, if I ever succeeded, it looked as though I was going to get a problem stepson.

I said now: "Aye, Pete, you're right. It is wild. That's what makes it beautiful. But we'd best be going. It's getting cold."

Once more he grappled with terror while we tackled that awkward spot. There was sweat on the white skin of his forehead. There was no actual risk, but his overworked imagination saw danger in every step. I gave him my hand.

Down in the dale he thanked me for taking him to see the peregrines, mounted his bike and rode off to his mother's cottage, five miles nearer the coast. I watched him vanishing between the dry-stone walls and told myself that Susan would have a deal of struggle before her boy got shaped to hold his own in this everyday world of ours.

It was on the Thursday, as I was driving to Greyhaven market, that I overtook Susan hurrying for the nearest bus halt. In the instant my morning had the sparkle of spring.

I stopped. "Hallo! Where are you off to?"

"Greyhaven."

"Jump in."

She got in beside me, a slender graceful figure in a tweed costume and a small hat. With her clear complexion and youthful manner she might have been twenty-five instead of thirty-five.

She had a firm, lovely mouth and an air of quiet self-confidence. Besides loving her, I admired her courage enormously. With no husband, no parents and only a meagre pension, she was managing wonderfully well.

She said: "Thanks for showing Pete the peregrines, Harry. He came back full of them." She glanced at me sideways. "Was he scared on Mart Fell?"

"A bit. People often are scared of heights. It doesn't mean anything."

"But Mart Fell isn't much of an Everest, is it? I suppose it's my fault if he's too timid. But he's all I have and——"

"Of course! I understand."

She gave me a grateful smile. "It's very difficult, for me as well as Pete. I'm terrified of letting him become a mollycoddle."

"He's not quite that."

She said: "No. But without careful handling he could be either that or miserably unhappy. It's an awful job steering a middle course."

"You worship him."

She made a queer, sighing sound. "That's a pale word for it. For years after Alex died I lived only for Pete. Until a year or so ago I couldn't bear to let him out of my sight."

"Bad for the boy."

"I know. I know. And I fought against it. I forced myself to be less anxious about him, forced him to be less dependent on me." She gave an awkward laugh. "It hurt hellishly."

"Aye, I bet it did." I took one hand from the wheel and slid it over hers. She let it stay there.

"As for sending him to boarding school last term, you've no idea of the agonies I went through. I saw him there, hideously lonely and lost." She laughed uncertainly. "Lots of parents who heard me talking like this would think I'm half-witted."

"Then they'd be gey stupid. You've got a strong will and I reckon it's led you into some sharp battles with yourself."

We were coming into sight of the coast and the Solway. On the far side of the water the hills of Galloway were dim sepia curves. To the south of them the Isle of Man formed a sprawling hummock crowned by a banner of thin cloud.

Susan stared at the scene and said: "That reminds me. I had a tussle with Pete this morning. Have you heard about the choughs on Garbarrow Head?"

"No," I said. Choughs, I knew, were fairly common on the Isle of Man, but there had been no report of any of those crow-like birds, with their red beaks and legs, on our mainland.

Susan said: "Jack Allerton's spotted a pair. The best way to look at them is from the sea. He invited Pete to go out and see them with him on Saturday afternoon, if it's calm."

I nodded. Jack was a tough, confident lad of fifteen, the son of our nearest doctor. They had a small boat with an outboard motor which they kept at Panswick Bay, the southern gap where Garbarrow flung its gigantic sandstone shoulder down to the shore.

SHE said: "Although Pete's crazy on bird-watching, he wanted to refuse. The sea frightens him. I told him not to be a silly little booby."

"He'll enjoy it when he's out there."

"Of course he will. I made him accept."

I said: "Garbarrow's a wonderful spot for seabirds generally. If you like, Susan, I'll run them down there on Saturday. I'm calling on a pal of mine at Underbank Farm to buy some livestock. If you'd care for a lift as well. . . ."

She hesitated. "Part of me aches to keep an eye on him in the boat. The other part says leave him alone." Then she laughed. "It's absurd to let him hang on to my apron strings—but I'd enjoy the drive out."

"That's grand," I said. "You come to Underbank with me and we'll pick the boys up later."

That was how we left things, and by three o'clock on the Saturday my car was parked at the end of the rutty lane leading to Underbank Farm, which was tucked away in a fold of the ground near the lighthouse. Peter and Jack set off for the bay. They were to be back on shore by four o'clock.

Before calling at Underbank, Susan and I went past the lighthouse and up to the edge of the cliff. Gulls were floating and wheeling whitely through space. The sea was a flatness of grey satin and we could hear no whisper of it against the cliff four hundred feet below.

It was impossible to stare straight down, for the sweeping fall of the overhang, a cracked pinkness balanced over the void, baulked the eyes.

Susan tasted the air. She said: "It's magnificent here."

"Aye, it is that. But keep away from the edge."

She drew back, amused. "I don't mind heights."

"Neither do I, particularly," I said, "but I couldn't stand much closer than this without getting a feather or two in the stomach."

We walked back to Underbank, inspected the livestock, and then went over to the ancient farmhouse itself and had a cup of tea.

It was quiet, peaceful. Not until we had left the place and were walking up the slope beyond the stackyard did I realize that the weather had started to change. A sycamore stood at the top of the bank. I noticed its higher branches bending and quivering.

Susan noticed it at the same time. Her carefree expression changed to tautness.

I said lightly: "They'll be back at the bay by now. We'll stroll down and meet them."

IT was nearly four o'clock, and I believed what I was saying. Jack Allerton would never be so feckless as to keep that little boat out with the wind rising in this fashion. Yet, because I wanted Susan's doubts to be stilled quickly, I made straight for the edge of the cliff.

We passed the lighthouse. We were more exposed now. A sailor might have called it no more than a capful of wind, but it had a voice, an intermittent gustiness. And we could hear the sea itself, a faint, grumbling sound.

We came to the edge. Flecks of cream speckled that satin far below. The satin itself gave an effect of rising and falling.

Then we saw something else, and the sight of it set Susan grabbing at my arm in mute dread.

The little boat was out there, just beyond where our line of vision cleared the overhang. It might have been a ridiculous toy on that huge expanse.

I said quickly: "All right, my dear, all right. They'll soon be landing."

Privately I was wondering why young Allerton had been such a fool. I knew nothing about seafaring, nothing about boats big or small. But common sense insisted that, with the weather blowing up the way it was, a cockleshell like that had no right to be there.

In a matter of seconds the reason was plain. My eyes were adjusting themselves to detail and I realized that instead of moving southwards, the boat was drifting sideways, inshore.

The engine must have failed.

Susan's hand tightened on my arm. She said

Continued on page 32

Susan seized the end of the rope. "I'm the one to go," she said. "If Pete's scared, I can steady him"

Thomas Bata's customers buy over a million pairs of shoes every week. He built an . . .

Empire round their feet

by JOHN HARMAN

ONE evening last year in the Canadian factory town of Batawa, Ontario, a convivial dinner party for eleven senior executives was nearly over when the tall and sun-tanned host, Thomas Bata, the self-styled "shoemaker to the world," turned the conversation to an urgent matter of business.

"Gentlemen," he asked, "which of you has damp feet?"

While his surprised guests took off their shoes to find out, he explained that he suspected one of his forty-six factories of making faulty products. He had himself tried thirty pairs of the factory's shoes, each of which had been uncomfortably hot, and he refused to accept his scientists' theory that his feet were entirely to blame.

When four of the executives admitted to suffering discomfort, and were found to have shoes from the factory in question, Bata declared that the problem was proved to exist and had to be solved.

"Eventually, it was traced to the leather used for the insoles. Too much acid in the tanning had harmed its porous qualities," he says. "The trouble has now been put right."

Bata, a Czech-born, naturalized Canadian of forty-one, who has dark, wavy hair, shrewd blue eyes, a Continental charm and a flashing smile which he bestows impartially on heads of state, subordinates and shopkeepers, tackles with directness the job of running one of the biggest family businesses on record.

When he came across a group of designers who were debating the sales appeal of their newest creations, he broke in and inquired when the men had last spoken to customers in a shop. The answers varied from two to three years. "Then we hardly know what we're talking about," he said—and sent for the manager of his nearest store.

Although a self-effacing streak in his nature, plús a desire to be loved by his staff as a democrat, prompts him to reject the title of the Shoe King—"The only king in *my* trade is the customer"—he is nevertheless the ruler of a vast industrial commonwealth which he has assessed as "worth perhaps a hundred and fifty million dollars."

HE employs 50,000 people who live in sixty-five countries and speak thirty different languages. They make and sell, according to his latest declaration, one and a half million pairs of shoes a week—a figure which his rivals claim is 500,000 below the true total. In Britain, he owns a chain of 278 shoe shops and has his main factory at East Tilbury, Essex. In addition to supplying the chain and making shoes for sale under trade names other than Bata, it exports 4,500,000 pairs a year and ranks as the country's largest exporter of footwear.

He travels constantly to keep in first-hand touch with his Batamen, as they are called, in places as far apart as Singapore, Cairo, the Belgian Congo and New Zealand. "I live in aeroplanes," he says. He averages 200,000 miles a year with a vigour, pace and unpredictability which has led to one secretary having a nervous breakdown and two others resigning to seek a calmer life.

Recently, in great haste, he left his Bond Street office for London Airport and seemingly vanished. Harassed aides, who thought he was going to Zürich, later heard through the grapevine which they have set up to cope with such emergencies that he had missed the Zürich flight by seconds and decided to take the next plane to Paris instead.

Many of his employees see in his restlessness, and in his physical appearance, a strong likeness to his founder father, a Bohemian cobbler who opened a factory in Zlin, Czechoslovakia, in 1894 on a legacy of £40, and died in an air crash in 1932. "The difference between their policies," says Philip Cowell, one of Bata's right-hand men, "is that his father branched out and laid the foundations of the business. Bata is strengthening and consolidating."

He is making each factory completely independent, so that if it became isolated—perhaps by war—it could still continue operating. And in order to make his organization as a whole as self-sufficient as possible, he has opened hide-gathering centres in Africa and the Far East, and rubber plantations in Africa and Malaya.

A thorough system of standardization, which puts the management of all his factories, shops and offices on the same lines, enables him to circulate his staff at will. They keep him informed of the latest time-saving techniques and machinery throughout the world.

"At Tilbury, he can do in two minutes a process of vulcanizing rubber to canvas which takes rival factories four minutes," says William Atkinson, a leading American shoe importer. "He is ten years ahead of everyone else—including shoemakers in the States."

Bata himself claims that his secret of being able to retail in Britain, for example, a man's working shoe for as little as 21s. 6d. and a woman's leather shoe for 22s. 6d., is a unique method of master-planning which pares production costs to the minimum.

Output is planned at least fifteen days in advance. Each day's allocation of materials is calculated to the last square foot of leather, the last nail and inch of thread. Workers are given tasks which must be finished daily before going home.

As an encouragement, the teams making the various types of shoes are treated as individual factories, separated from the others by white-painted lines on the floor. Their foremen get

Workers leaving the main Bata works in Essex. The day starts at 7.30 a.m. and ends when allotted tasks are completed

A display in the factory showroom. Using streamlined methods, Bata can market shoes for as little as 21s. 6d.

Bata attends to a customer in his new Oxford Street store. His wife (standing) presides over the design of his shops

weekly statements in which the value of shoes produced is contrasted with the cost of making them—the wages, materials, electricity used, machinery repairs and even the amount of soap for cleaning. High, economical outputs are rewarded with bonuses.

"The foremen are, in fact, in private business," says Bata. "Like their colleagues, they earn the best wages in the British shoe industry." He urges his staff to draw only enough of their money to meet day-to-day expenses, however; the remainder can be left in the firm on interest to assist development schemes.

Townships, such as Batawa in Canada, Batapur in Pakistan, Batanagar in India and East Tilbury in Britain, provide homes, shops, cinemas and sports facilities close to his factories and technical colleges. Work begins at 7.30 a.m., and discipline is strict—a foreman who erred was demoted to the job of checker, and had to strive hard, without bearing a grudge, to regain his original position—but Batamen maintain that the spartan life has a compensation in the chances for rapid and spectacular promotion.

JOHN TUSA, the managing director at Tilbury, recalls that when he was twenty-two he had a blunt, fifteen-minute interview with Bata's father and was put in charge of a tannery employing 450 people. In 1951, Bata showed similar faith in a youngster of the same age, who had started in his Dutch plant when sixteen. He sent him to establish a factory in Ceylon. "I do not believe that a man can succeed as an industrial leader unless he has done manual work," says Bata.

He became an apprentice at the Bata factory at Zlin, Czechoslovakia, when he was fifteen—the age at which he got his pilot's licence—and studied for two years to win a master shoemaker's degree.

Before that, he had been at boarding school in England and received a sharp lesson in independence. At the end of one term, when he was eight, and wanted to go to Zlin for the holidays, his father sent him a map and some timetables. "I was told to find my own way home," says Bata.

He was eighteen when he went to Switzerland with instructions to work as a salesman and then open a factory, but his father was killed soon afterwards. The will of Bata senior, the idealist, contained this warning to his son: "As soon as you begin to think only of yourself, as soon as you cease to serve the general community, your hour will have struck and you will inexorably sink to your doom."

In March, 1939, Bata returned to Zlin after four years at Tilbury. He learned at a few hours' notice that the Nazis were to invade Czechoslovakia, and set out to escape to Switzerland, but his large black car sank axle-deep in snow near the frontier in Austria. He reached Switzerland by crossing the Salzburg Alps on foot in a blizzard. The following month he arrived in Canada and began the creation of Batawa.

After serving in the Canadian Reserve Army during the war he went back to Zlin and had another narrow escape—this time from the Communists. The late President Benes warned him that they were plotting to detain him in a matter of minutes. He left by air, and several months later arranged a similarly dramatic flight for his mother. As her plane took off, angry officials who had issued her with a passport by mistake ran on to the airfield in a vain effort to stop her.

Bata has lost all connection with the giant factory at Zlin, which, in his day, employed 50,000 people and produced over 40 million pairs of leather and rubber shoes a year. Costly litigation, in which he has proved to be an implacable opponent, has restrained them from marketing shoes under his name. Also, since the war, he has fought a running battle in the law courts of thirty countries with his step-uncle, Jan, who acted as regent while he was a minor and disputed the inheritance from his father.

In terms of the size of his organization, Bata ranks among the world's richest men, but he draws only a nominal salary. "I have no luxury yachts, or villas in the south of France. Every penny profit is ploughed back into the business."

He has apartments in London and Zürich. His third home, in Canada, is a five-room brick bungalow in the village of Frankford, Ontario, which means that when he does the 150-mile journey to Ottawa he rises at 4.30 a.m., dresses in his chauffeur-driven car as it touches 80 m.p.h., and reaches his destination in time for a shave, breakfast and appointments starting at 8 a.m.

He married his Swiss-born wife Sonja, an architectural student, in 1946—after proposing to her while piloting a two-seater plane. They have three children: Monica, who will be one year old in July; Christine, three, and Tommy, the eight-year-old Bata III, a source of speculation among his future employees, who wonder what preparation his father will give him for his destiny.

Today, Mrs. Bata has almost as much influence as Bata himself. She travels with him, presides over conferences on design and supervises the construction of new shops. "She made me realize that prewar styles of architecture, which I thought were smart, are now old fashioned," he says. "We are building shops which will be modern in the nineteen-sixties."

His air of supreme authority is reserved for occasions when he feels that his staff fails to share his enthusiasm. Once, he visited a shop and delivered a lecture on the importance of pushing merchandise other than shoes. As he was finishing, a smart young woman entered and asked to see a pair of slippers.

Bata seized the opportunity of serving her. He fitted her successfully and, aware that the assistants were watching him, suggested that she might be interested in further purchases. He managed to sell her, with very little effort, some evening shoes, hosiery and polish.

"But I've been warned never to repeat my lecture in that shop," he says. "It seems that the woman knew who I was and bought merely in the hope of flattering me. The next day she went back, returned the lot and asked for a refund." THE END

JOHN BULL PHOTOGRAPHS BY LAWRENCE HANLEY

to cry at the note of strain in his voice and I realized desperately that he was at the end of his tether. My voice was bright with false cheerfulness.

"There are some wonderful dog shows here. In fact, my aunt intends to buy a dog as soon as she can find the right breed. We are all so thrilled at the thought."

Too late in the day I was being cautious, but he understood that I was trying to tell him about the invitation that a man I must call Peter was trying to arrange for him. This was the plan we would have to fall back on. If Andrzej received an important invitation to perform in the West, the Polish authorities might be tempted by its propaganda value to take the risk of letting him accept. Peter was doing all he could to arrange for such an invitation. But time was running out. . . .

The Iron Curtain fell between us as I replaced the receiver. My disappointment throbbed like a wound as I ran upstairs to dress. Ten to seven —I was going to be late. There was no time now to brood on the disturbing significance of Andrzej's absence from the congress or the fact that this was the first time he had not been included in the peace delegation. I paused in the act of slipping an old dress over my head. Suddenly fear left me and a deeply satisfying hatred took its place as I thought of the coming *zebranie*—a Communist Party pep talk—at the Polish Embassy, and all it stood for. I had to go. If once the embassy doubted my loyalty everything was lost.

Feeling vicious, I thought: *I'll give them something to think about,* and flung my old frock aside.

Dressed to kill, I looked at my reflection in the mirror, pleased with my little effort. I would provide the bright spot at the gathering of the party clan.

I grabbed a taxi. As we drew near the embassy in Portland Place my courage ebbed away; then once again the memory of Andrzej's tired voice returned and I shook not with fear but with anger as the door swung open.

The whole embassy staff was packed into a long, narrow room reserved for the *zebranie*. My dress, more suitable for a cocktail party than a Communist meeting, caused the ripple of excitement and disapproval that I had hoped for. As I took my place beside the ambassador's wife one of the doorkeepers usually on guard below shut the door, folded his arms and stood squarely against it.

A rough dais had been erected at the far end of the room and someone I hadn't seen before, a small, dark man, clambered on to the stand and raised his hand for silence. I looked at him with interest. He was obviously one of the important backroom boys who seldom come into the public eye.

"*Tavarischi.*"

I raised my head sharply. It is unusual to start off a Polish party meeting in Russian. Moscow's cherished aim is to invest the Communist parties of the satellite countries with the semblance of complete independence.

Somebody coughed. The Backroom Boy paused, shuffled his feet and began again.

"Comrades. . . ." This time he said it in Polish. I began to see why he had inadvertently started in Russian: his Polish was excruciating. He announced that one of the porters, as a representative of the people, had written a speech in honour of Workers' Day which he would now read.

The porter shuffled forward. He had difficulty in reading the text. I wondered who had written it; the falseness, the incredible lies, the incitement to hate were all there. Nothing had changed because this was London.

Frenzied clapping followed each mention of the Soviet Union and each use of the spoilt word "peace." The porter left the dais and the Backroom Boy started to chant the interminable Communist litany.

Cheers were carefully modulated according to the recipient—more for the Soviet Union and

A year after marrying, Scarlett and Andrzej went on holiday to Obory, where they had met. By their third anniversary they had escaped to the West

Panufnik (left) at a gathering in Moscow during one of his many propaganda trips. In Switzerland he planned his escape to Britain

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In Britain, Panufnik has conducted many of the leading orchestras. He has also been free to compose without the guidance of "experts"

After a London concert Panufnik (right) joins two friends, Polish pianist Malcuzinski and Artur Rodzinski, the American conductor

China, less for the satellites. We got to our feet as he gave us the signal to sing the "Internationale."

Mouthing the words with the rest, I felt that the whole affair had suddenly taken on all the trappings of a fantastic dream. This could not be happening in London. I had experienced such evenings a thousand times behind the Curtain, and it looked as though I would experience them a thousand times more in the future, but never in my wildest flights of imagination had I seen myself singing the "Internationale" at a Polish *zebranie* a stone's throw from Regent Street.

With the end of the "Internationale" everyone relaxed and, following the ambassador, we all trooped into the large dining-hall. There we pledged our loyalty to the cause of the proletariat and the Soviet Union rather more pleasantly in vodka.

The consul-general asked me what I had thought of the porter's speech. "Perfect," I replied. He looked pleased and I knew before he told me that he had written it. I looked around for the Backroom Boy, but he was nowhere to be seen.

Within two hours everyone was merry and tables were pushed back against the wall as dancing began to a record of "Moskva Moya." In accordance with Iron Curtain etiquette the dancers held each other at arm's length, loudly singing in Russian the words of the hackneyed tune and drowning the high, sweet, tenor voice which came from the record. Vodka works quickly and all effort to keep up a Polish façade was given up under its loosening influence. The room was filled with Russian melodies and the Russian language.

Suddenly the Backroom Boy appeared from nowhere. With great interest I watched him approach the gramophone, take off the Soviet record and replace it by a prewar Polish tango. The ambassador stiffened as the Backroom Boy approached our table and whispered rapidly into his ear.

Something's up, I thought, twiddling my tumbler of vodka. My heart thudded as the man looked at me. Surely that telephone conversation could not have been reported already. But he smiled as the ambassador said my name and, relaxing, I shook his proffered hand in the brief, hard and approved Communist manner. His name was not mentioned.

The ambassador stood up and, turning to me, said that we were about to be joined by some British comrades. So that was the reason for the change of records. After all, this was supposed to be the Polish Embassy. The Backroom Boy had remembered party policy, even if the others were too drunk to do so. . . .

The red May Day banners were swollen by the afternoon wind as the long procession wound its way into Hyde Park for the British Communists' May Day rally. The ambassador parked his car near the gates and refused to leave it, saying that it wouldn't do for him to be seen. I sat in the back of the car observing the scene. The consul-general and Helena Stroczan, the cultural attaché, parked their car a little to the rear of ours and, after a moment joined us.

Sticking his head through the open window of our car, the consul-general said jubilantly, pointing to the parade: "I told you so; there are hundreds of them. It won't be long now before we take over."

Then, directing himself at me: "Aren't you excited at the near prospect of your country being freed from the capitalist yoke? It won't be long now; it won't be long."

I looked at the crowd. It was perfectly true that the parade was large, much larger than I had imagined it would be. "Let's go and listen to Pollitt," someone said. "He should be somewhere around."

I joined the consul-general on the pavement, but the ambassador shook his head and said that he had better go. We waved goodbye and made our way towards the crowd in the park. Again the curtain of unreality descended with the sound of the familiar slogans and clichés spoken in unfamiliar English.

Suddenly I saw the Backroom Boy standing on the far edge of the crowd. The others must have seen him, too, but they gave no sign and he quite deliberately turned his back on our little party.

For no apparent reason the others suddenly decided that they had had enough and thankfully I made for home. . . .

THE hands of the clock inside Victoria Station pointed to fifteen minutes past four. Peter was late. I had stood for some time under the board marking the departure of trains for Brighton before he appeared, dwarfing passers-by with his burly frame.

As he made his way towards me I was filled with a sense of security and well-being. It was his suggestion that we should meet at Victoria. It was a good idea, for it would be difficult for anyone to shadow us among the milling crowds.

I smiled at him in relief and followed as he led the way through the station and out into a series of dingy streets, stopping before a tiny café boasting a cardboard sign in one of its unwashed windows marked: TEAS.

As I stared into my cup I could feel Peter looking at me. "I told you not to get too worked up," he said gently. "Tell me exactly what happened."

When I had finished, he shook his head. "It doesn't look too good. Did you find the names of the other members of the delegation?"

I had. It was the usual group; only Andrzej's name was missing. We mulled it over from every angle for about an hour. There was only one possible conclusion. The party was taking no chances.

"Does the embassy suspect anything?"

I shrugged wearily. "It's impossible to tell. Of course they may just be waiting for me to slip up, but somehow I don't think so. They are very friendly and anxious to please. But even if they were suspicious they'd be slow to show their hand. If they accused me wrongly, Andrzej could make things very hot for them in Warsaw. But one never knows, one *never* knows."

Peter nodded. "Look here," he said, suddenly brisk. "Don't let this worry you, but I've got to take a few others into my confidence. I find I can't wangle this invitation off my own bat. It's been years since anybody has been asked to do recordings or a concert from behind the Curtain and it's got to be done properly. If

Continued on page 43

THE NEW AUSTRALIAN

by ***RICHARD CLAPPERTON***

ILLUSTRATED BY NIVEN

CRABBES CREEK, on the New South Wales north coast, was the last place I'd have expected to meet Vic Keresztes. After more than ten years since our childhood evacuation together during the war, he stood there, at the store counter, tall, thin, in worn denims and sandals. He hadn't changed much, though his lean jaw had hardened, and his once humorous eyes didn't light up when he saw me, the way they would once have done.

I asked what he'd been doing since the war.

"Went back to Hungary, Jimmy. Studied medicine after it was all over."

"Then you're the doctor here?"

"No. Banana-batching." He smiled, rather grimly, I thought. "It's hard work, but the pay——"

"Banana-batching! What the devil is a doctor doing with bananas?"

"Come out to the plantation. I'll tell you as we drive."

We climbed into his truck and set off.

"You see," Vic said, "though I qualified in Hungary, I have to do the last three years of my medical course here, because in Australia my Hungarian degree isn't recognized. I can't practise immediately, and I have to work at something; so . . . bananas."

He added wearily: "But sometimes, Jimmy, I'm disillusioned about the people. I mean, the bad migrants have laid my bed for me. The people here become cautious in the end. They don't trust me. Can't blame them, really."

"But . . . bananas!"

"I have to live, Jimmy. Besides, I was sponsored out on the assisted-passage scheme and didn't have any money to live on while I finished the course."

I glanced at him as he drove. The sensitive hands on the steering wheel were brown and gnarled, pocked by the inevitable small injuries of land men. His eyes were hooded, bitter.

"Didn't you know about the doctor's course before you came?" I asked.

He nodded. "I was prepared to stick it out, work for a while till I had enough money to go down to Sydney for the course." He paused. "But, Jimmy, so many New Australians are the wrong kind. You read about them in the papers, every day, in the courts, in prison.

"And the culprit," he added gloomily, "always has a name like mine."

"How does your employer feel about you?"

"You'll find out for yourself," he said, as we turned in through the plantation gates.

We left the truck and walked up the worn scree path. The plantation valley rose smoothly on both sides of us. It was a year after the new planting and the earth was coolly dark under the green umbrella-leaves.

In the bottom of the valley there was a hut, which Vic said was his home. Nearby was a packing shed of clean yellow wood: from the shed a wire ran up the valley side to the banana plantation.

Vic jumped up on the packing platform and dumped his bag. Then he looked at the hut and said: "Here's your chance to meet my employer, Jimmy."

I turned to meet Matt Crusoe. He was a serious, leathery little man. His mouth sagged at the corners, with deep lines running from his eyes, nose, mouth, down to heavy jowls, ending in diamond creases at his old neck. From dark hat-brim shadow his pale blue eyes glinted curiously at us.

"Who's your pal?"

"A friend I met during the war," Vic said.

"Foreigner, too?"

"Would it make any difference if I were?" I asked.

"Oh, a Pommy!' The old man exhaled through his nose. "Want to see the plantation, I expect. Come and have a drink first."

HE turned back to the hut and I followed. Vic jumped off the platform, and was coming too, when Crusoe slowly turned to stare at him.

"Where d'you think you're going, Krusty?"

Vic opened his mouth, shut it, then shrugged hopelessly and went back to the platform.

"Wait a minute," I said, "he's a friend of mine." I added heavily: "He's the one I'd rather drink with."

Crusoe said sharply: "Mister, there're two hours' daylight left. Work can be done in that time, an' your pal works for me."

Vic said: "Go on, Jimmy. I'll see you after. Don't mind it."

Unwillingly I followed the old man into the hut. There were no chairs, and we sat on banana boxes. The only furniture was an old stained table and a fly-gauzed food cabinet. Sunlight filtered through in rays from timber cracks, and dust and flies rose slowly up in the gold of it.

We drank home-brewed beer from old jam tins. "I sponsored your mate out here from Hungary," Matt Crusoe said. "Needed somebody to help run the plantation, so he did just fine." He grinned. "Cheap labour!"

"How d'you mean?"

"He signed an agreement to work for me two years. Give him his food, little pocket money each week, he's satisfied. Them foreign blokes are just glad enough to get a place to sleep."

"But you don't understand," I said. "He's a doctor, not a coolie. He doesn't belong here. He's doing it because he has to."

"My word he has to!" Crusoe said grimly. "Damn good job one o' them foreigners knows what work is—and even then I have to drive him to it. Think they can come here and loaf around, think they can do anything."

He went on indignantly: "Know what that Hungarian pal o' yours did last week? Took my brother's daughter into Mur'bah. A *show* she said! Girl's got no sense." He shook his head, and then looked at me quizzically. "An' as for him bein' a doctor, what makes you think anybody here'd ask him for advice?"

"He's a trained doctor, you fool! He went through the same exams they do here."

The old man grinned crookedly. "You're all for him, ain't you? Well, listen, mister, I gave you a drink because I like good English company. But if you keep on——"

I didn't wait to hear any more. I went out and found Vic in the packing shed. He said quietly: "Now you know what I'm up against, Jimmy."

"But why do you put up with it?"

"Why?" He hesitated. Then he said: "Jimmy, before I leave here, I'm going make that man like me."

"Come off it, Vic——!"

"He represents the people I want to live with. Jimmy, you've got to understand—I've got to make friends somewhere."

"What about me? And the girl?"

He smiled. "Well, Ruth's more than a friend, Jimmy. We're going to be married some day, though the old tyrant doesn't know it yet. She's

The injustice was suddenly stark. Ruth turned on the old man. "I think it's time you knew that Vic and I intend to get married"

Matt might die—with venom in

his heart. He could not forgive

this foreigner for loving Ruth

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An enthralling new novel of love and intrigue

Shadow of the moon

by M. M. KAYE

Randall and Winter . . . painted by Edwin Phillips

INDIA in 1857. . . . In the teeming bazaars and on the scorching plains there is talk of revolt. Men with muffled faces gather in the dark shadows and plot death to the *Feringhee*, the British rulers. There are scattered, cruel incidents. And then, with incredible swiftness, panic sweeps across the continent and explodes into mass violence.

The Indian Mutiny is a momentous chapter in the history of the British Empire—and a fabulous setting for a novel. In her new serial, M. M. Kaye has captured its grandeur, and with a superbly told romance she has brought to life the plight of people when world-shattering events trap them in private hells of fear. For this is a human story of fascinating people. . . .

There is Winter de Ballesteros, a beautiful young heiress. She has come to India to marry Conway Barton, the Commissioner of Lunjore. In love with her memory of him, she finds that he has become a dissolute drunkard in the years between. But her mockery of a marriage ends as her husband is cut down by the mob. With him die his officers, brave, trusting men who pay with their lives for mistaken loyalties. And their wives and families are sacrificed, too.

Winter escapes into the jungle with two other women and Alex Randall, a young officer who had warned her that marriage to Barton would bring her only misery. Now, hunted through India's strangling forests, they find their own love growing. But for them the future can only be hardship and privation as fugitives, stalked and harried through a hostile land.

M. M. Kaye has a deep understanding of India. Now, with "Shadow Of The Moon" she has written a story on the grand scale, a vivid account of a catastrophic event. It traces the human background to the holocaust, poignantly and sympathetically, and tells a tender love story of unforgettable people. "Shadow Of The Moon". . .

BEGINS IN JOHN BULL NEXT WEEK

a great help, Ruth. I'd like you to meet her."

Suddenly, the old man was at the hut door. "Hey, Krusty!" he shouted. "What about some work for a change?"

Vic stiffened, then relaxed slowly. "His nickname for me. Thinks I'm crushed by it. Goodbye, Jimmy, I'll ring you tomorrow. . . ."

Vic and Ruth arrived in Murwillumbah next morning and we went to a café together.

Ruth was a pretty girl, with a perfect little oval face framed in dark curls. Her brown eyes were very sincere, and she had a frank, direct way of talking.

We talked about old Crusoe's attitude to Vic.

"The thing is," Ruth said, "there's nothing Vic can do to show his sincerity but say so, and I'm afraid that doesn't carry much weight with Uncle Matt. Most people here seem to feel the same. They like the English, love the Scots, but Hungarians, Poles, Austrians, anyone like that, they're suspicious of."

"Which is understandable," Vic said. "This is a great country, and a young one, and they want it populated with the right people."

Just then, the café proprietor asked Vic to move his truck from the door because he was expecting another truck. Vic excused himself and went out.

When we were alone, Ruth said hesitantly: "Jimmy, have you known Vic long?"

"During the war. We went everywhere together then."

"Are you still his best friend? He said you were."

"Yes, I suppose so. Childhood ties are pretty firm, sometimes."

SHE leaned towards me. "Then can I ask you something? Jimmy, will you help him? I know you could."

"But how——?"

"Just stay awhile. If only for a week. He needs someone like you, Jimmy; a friend, someone he can trust. You could stay at Burringbar—it's only a few minutes from the plantation." She looked at me appealingly: "Jimmy—would you?"

"Well," I said. "I'm on a vacation, and I suppose one place is as good as another. Trouble is, though, I blotted my copybook with your uncle yesterday. Told him he was a fool."

"Oh, he doesn't mind that," Ruth said. "And he loves company." She added, bitterly: "English company, that is."

The following afternoon, I moved out to Burringbar, which was within short walking distance of the plantation.

Every day Vic worked steadily, hacking off banana batches and sending them down the wire to old Crusoe, who unloaded and packed them. It was hot work. In the mornings the sun scorched the valley. At noon, you felt your scalp burn and shiver, and even when the sun was down the heat lived long under the skin.

It was dangerous work too. Copperheads and death-adders coiled invisibly in the young banana plants, and the medicine chest in the shed contained only Condy's Crystals.

Matt Crusoe was too old to go up the plantation any more, so he worked in the packing shed—packing, he said, was a highly specialized art.

At the day's end he and Vic ate in the hut. They slept on camp beds in the packing shed.

On Sunday I drove Ruth to the plantation. She had not been there very often before, because the old man hated to see her so near

Continued on page 32

Wizards at War

by GERALD PAWLE

Nevil Shute creates a fiery demon

Its rocket burning, the missile smashed into the submarine's engine room. The novelist's secret weapon had claimed another victim

PART 3

THE naval scientists and engineers of the Wheezers and Dodgers devised many strange weapons in their war against Germany's U-boats, but none was stranger than Nevil Shute Norway's Rocket Spear. The weapon was a simple affair—a rocket-propelled spear with a cast-iron fluted head which would rip a large hole in the pressure hull of a U-boat—and perhaps its very simplicity told against it.

When Norway—a brilliant engineer, whose hobby was writing novels—put forward his idea to the special Admiralty committee which had been formed to investigate all possible means of attacking submarines, he found that the minds of the committee seemed fixed on more refined and scientific devices. Even Charles Goodeve, the head of the Directorate of Miscellaneous Weapon Development—as the Wheezers and Dodgers were officially known—was not altogether satisfied that Norway's theory could be translated into practice.

"Why on earth shouldn't it work?" said Norway testily, after one particularly abortive meeting in the Admiralty. "You can spear a fish quite successfully, and the principle is exactly the same. There was nothing wrong with the trials we did in the tank at Teddington."

"I know there wasn't," Goodeve admitted, "but I still don't think it will keep straight after impact. It will turn over."

Undaunted, Norway gave the Rocket Spear some more ambitious tests. It emerged triumphantly, and after that Goodeve was no longer sceptical. But outside the department no one showed any interest in the weapon, and it was not until the army asked for rockets to be tried as anti-tank missiles that Norway got a chance to justify his claims.

For the anti-tank trials the R.A.F. allocated a Hurricane, and somewhat reluctantly they agreed to test the Spear against submarine plating at the same time.

Among those who heard of the trials about to take place was Admiral Sir Max Horton, who as Commander-in-Chief, Western Approaches, was now directing the Battle of the Atlantic from his headquarters at Liverpool. Horton immediately dispatched one of his staff to Boscombe Down to see if the Rocket Spear had possibilities. The officer was greatly impressed by the trials, and Horton at once urged the Admiralty to adopt it.

It took just a matter of weeks to introduce the new weapon. Norway paid one or two visits to the Royal Aircraft Establishment at Farnborough, to see that it took shape on the right lines. After that there was nothing more for him to do but to await developments. They were not long in coming.

A flight of Swordfish embarked in H.M.S. Archer, an escort carrier supporting Atlantic convoys, was armed with the Rocket Spear. At the same time the missile was fitted to an R.A.F. Beaufort squadron based at Gibraltar. It then became a race for the first kill.

The Archer sailed for the United States, and had an entirely uneventful passage; patrolling in the Mediterranean approaches the Beaufort squadron also drew a blank. Then, returning from the North American coast with a convoy eastward bound, one of Archer's Swordfish pilots sighted a U-boat.

Before she could dive, he got a hit with a rocket which holed the pressure hull, and now there was no escape. She tried to fight it out on the surface with her gun, but the Swordfish which had dealt the blow called up a Martlet fighter from the Archer. The submarine's crew, overcome by machine-gun fire, sank their boat and leaped into the sea. When they were picked up, survivors asked in amazement what had hit them. All they knew of the first attack was a sudden, tremendous bang on the pressure hull, and the spear passed right through the boat.

From other survivors—the crew of an Italian submarine sunk in the Mediterranean—came a graphic description of the devastation caused by the Rocket Spear. They had been attacked at such close range that the rocket was still burning when the spear smashed its way into the engine room. Once inside the hull of the submarine it ricocheted off the engines, and thrashed wildly about before tearing a way out on the opposite side of the boat.

Norway was away from London when the news of the Rocket Spear's first kill reached the Admiralty. From Goodeve he received this message:

> You will be pleased to hear, if you haven't done so already, that the Anti-Submarine Rocket Projectiles from aircraft scored a success the first time they were used. I am particularly pleased as it fully substantiates the foresight you showed in pushing this in its early stages. My congratulations.

Another of Nevil Shute Norway's inventions

Nevil Shute was a key member of the Wheezers and Dodgers. Before merchant vessels had radar, his acoustic detector (left) warned them of aircraft nearby

ILLUSTRATION BY CLIVE UPTTON

The men on the gunboat stared in astonishment at the German trawler. A fierce white light blazed for a few seconds: then the flames flared out

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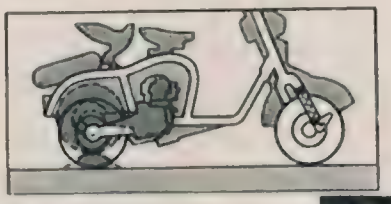

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was the Acoustic Warning Device. Without radar in the war's earliest stages, merchant ships were at the mercy of aircraft when cloud covered the sky. The first warning they had was the swoop of the plane from the grey ceiling above the ship, and the whistle of the falling bombs.

Thinking over this problem, Norway wondered if it was possible to put a device on the mast-head which would react to the sound frequencies generated by an aircraft. He visited the research department of a large gramophone company at Hayes, and soon experiments evolved an apparatus consisting of twin microphones ingeniously arranged to give a heart-shaped lobe of sensitivity. This helped to screen noises from the ship itself, but if an aircraft came within a range of two miles the listening microphones would pick it up. Immediately a warning bell would ring, and a red light would flash on the bridge.

To speed development of the device the department took on another newcomer, Arthur Biddell, who found himself afloat in an old Channel Islands passenger boat off the Firth of Forth, where the warning apparatus was given its trials.

The first snag cropped up with the discovery that the device would need some form of outer covering to shield the sensitive microphones from the sound of the wind—a teasing problem, for they would obviously have to find a material which did not blanket off the aircraft noises as well. This led to one of the department's most unusual quests: Britain was combed for bath-room loofahs. It proved difficult to track down enough of them, and in the end ten thousand had to be shipped in from abroad. Later on a substitute was found in the stuffing of domestic mattresses.

Under Duncan Bruce, a department team, the Kentucky Minstrels, tried to camouflage the river Thames—with a coal dust screen

Bearded Louis Klemantaski (left), the motor-racing photographer, on board a submarine. He was nearly killed during secret weapon trials

Biddell now set to work to filter out a variety of other irrelevant noises. In spite of the clever design of the microphones the early models tried at sea proved distinctly fallible. Masters of ships sailing down the Thames claimed that they always got an "aircraft" warning from the trams on Southend pier. Heavy bow waves and even particularly raucous seagulls also alerted the device, but gradually Norway and Biddell improved the equipment to such an extent that it would automatically filter all noises lasting less than four seconds.

This rid them of their greatest difficulty, for in the early stages any very loud, sharp noise on board, such as a hatch cover being slammed down, was liable to set the alarm going, and the men on the bridge would frantically scan the sky for approaching bombers.

The device had one lasting drawback. It reacted just as violently whether an aircraft was friendly or hostile. On the high seas, however, where friendly planes were few and far between, it soon proved its value. On one occasion, when a convoy was steaming slowly across the Atlantic in thick fog, the warning bell in a ship straggling astern rang all the afternoon. The microphones had unerringly picked up the engines of a U-boat stalking them on the surface.

The listening ear was fitted to the mast-head of many hundred merchant ships, and it did much to relieve the nervous strain of hard-pressed watch-keeping sailors, until radar was fitted to the larger merchant ships.

As each new weapon gave the merchant seamen new means of detecting attackers in the air or under the water, so the Germans altered their tactics. The U-boats now began to rely increasingly on the cover of darkness. They would close in on the surface, trimmed for diving, with decks awash, and only the conning tower really visible. Even on a light night it was not easy to see them when they were much over half a mile away.

What was urgently needed was a method of turning night into day—both immediately over a convoy, and farther out on the flanks to a distance of about 4,000 yards. For the first task the navy already possessed a large and brilliant flare called the Snowflake, and to increase its effect the department was asked to find a way of projecting this to a greater height.

The problem was given to Denys Richardson, Goodeve's second-in-command. With the aid of the Schermuly brothers—the rocket apparatus firm—he solved the first part of it within a week, fitting the flare and its parachute into the head of a rocket which carried the Snowflake to well over a thousand feet. But still the difficulty of illuminating the area *outside* the convoy screen remained.

For a fortnight Richardson spent every spare moment studying technical reports of starshell trials, and the behaviour of different types of illuminant. Then, armed with some rough drawings, he went to see Goodeve.

"I believe I've got the answer to this starshell business. Do you think D.N.O. would agree to our trying it out?"

Goodeve looked at the drawings. "It's pretty revolutionary," he said. "Still, we can put it up to them and see what they say. We shall probably be told that it's quite impracticable."

Then he stared at the notes in front of him again. Richardson's design was unlike any other starshell ever invented. Planned for use in quick-firing two-pounder guns, it had no parachute and, falling fast through the air, it was to burn for less than five seconds. But the method of operation was ingenious, for Richardson was suggesting that five of these shells should be in the air at once, their paths of light joining up and reinforcing each other so that a continuous sweep could be made at the rate of three degrees every second.

As they had expected, the Director of Naval Ordnance's staff was decidedly sceptical. But the department was allowed to go ahead. As an initial target Richardson aimed at producing a magnesium flare of about half a million candle-power which would burn for two seconds. To make certain that this would be powerful enough, teams armed with balloons and oxygen cylinders were sent to sea in the Bristol Channel. With the flares attached—they were actuated by a delay fuse—the balloons were then released, and ciné cameras on H.M.S. Birnbeck, the pier used by the department at Weston-super-Mare, recorded the spreading path of light on the dark water.

Prototypes of the flare were tested in wind tunnels, and—much to the alarm of Londoners, who feared that a new and dreadful form of air raid was imminent—some were lit on the roof of the Royal College of Science in Kensington.

Before the powerful new starshell could be issued for action, however, an important new development occurred in anti-submarine warfare. A new type of radar set which enabled rapid and continuous search for surfaced U-boats was fitted to convoy vessels in 1943. This deprived Richardson's starshell of the main rôle for which it had been designed. These advanced radar sets were, however, scarce; there was none for frigates and light coastal forces engaged in the E-boat war, and since the Motor Torpedo Boats and Motor Gun Boats had no form of illuminant at all the two-pounder starshell was a godsend.

The earliest reports of its performance at sea surprised even Richardson. The captain of the M.G.B. which fired the first starshells in action ordered his gunlayer to aim directly at a German trawler. To his astonishment the starshells caused instant and fierce fires. As they struck home a blazing white light illuminated the ship for several seconds, and immediately afterwards flames flared out all over the superstructure.

Richardson had not suspected the starshells to have any special incendiary properties, and much intrigued he carried out some laboratory tests of his own. He found that the shells would, in fact, easily pierce wooden hulls and light plating; the star burst over a wide area with a bright glow which would undoubtedly cause fires in the presence of petrol or oil leaks.

It was therefore recommended that all coastal force craft should belt the starshell rounds alternately with their high explosive ammunition, and on the nights of October 24 and 25 they were thus used in a number of actions with E-boats. One commanding officer described the effect as devastating. Of three boats attacked in one particular sector that night one was rammed and sunk, and the remaining two were quickly

Continued on page 40

THE PROVING FLIGHT

by DAVID BEATY

ILLUSTRATED BY ZELINSKI

They must take one more desperate chance. But to Bellamy this girl was suddenly, tenderly important. . . . She, at least, must not die

He understood his anger now. Gently, he put his arm round her shoulder

EMPEROR ALFA DELTA's last perilous lap was Bermuda - London — the whole wide Atlantic to cross in a plane with dangerously defective controls. In the opinion of her pilot, Andrew Bellamy, it would be madness to attempt the flight. . . .

Bellamy was more than half in love with pretty Lalette Greenacres, one of the stewardesses. He was determined not to risk her life—nor the lives of the passengers and crew.

The Emperor would not be really air-safe until new boosters were fitted. But Sir James Joliffe, chairman of the firm which owned the Emperor, had millions staked on the proving flight's success. He was recklessly determined to carry on.

Bellamy argued that they should wait for new boosters to arrive from England. The chairman was strangely compliant. He readily agreed to let the others vote on whether they should complete the trip.

Bellamy had no doubt of the outcome—but he didn't quite appreciate Joliffe's subtle capacity for getting what he wanted. And Bermuda's balmy air had melted the icy memories of their outward trip.

The final decision was unanimous. Go? Of course they'd go.

Bellamy could hardly believe it. To fly the Atlantic with the old, faulty boosters was tantamount to suicide. . . .

FINAL INSTALMENT

"Alfa Delta Is Ready To Roll"

THAT evening the stars still shone down over Bermuda, but the eastern horizon was rimmed with a heavy line of black, cracked now and then by forks of lightning.

But with the unpredictable cussedness of human nature, most of the Emperor's inhabitants were in a party spirit, now their decisions had been taken. The heatwave was not yet quite over; and the last sun-drenched day and a half had done much to disperse the traditionally British fog of doubt and pessimism.

Except for Bellamy. He stood on the edge of the dance floor that night, while the singer in front of the band crooned the delights of "A Bermuda Buggy Ride." He was talking to a group of Americans who had come over to the hotel for this farewell party.

The Americans were enjoying the sulky-looking Englishman's intermittent smiles with the added respect that they always accorded to rarities. And they rewarded his rather dry remarks with considerably more than their due mead of laughter.

But Lalette, who knew her man, watched his face with growing concern.

Late in the evening Bellamy asked her to

The aircraft plunged seawards. Caught unawares, Lalette and Joliffe were spilled like dice on the floor . . .

dance. They held themselves stiffly against each other as they walked gravely around to the time of the music. Then, just as they were beside the glass terrace door, Bellamy danced her through. She dropped her hands quickly from him as soon as they were outside.

"Let's walk," he said, and started across the terrace towards the dark, sweet-smelling lawns.

Side by side they walked slowly out into the night. The walls of a storm were fortifying the eastern sky. A faint roll of thunder was muffled by thick cloud, as the bright lights from the ballroom threw their shadows in their path like black cats of ill omen.

"It's like the night before Waterloo," Lalette said softly and looked up at his face. It was grave and preoccupied. Heavy with trouble like the sky he stared at.

Very quietly, she let him slip her arm through his, and then lengthened her stride to walk in a melancholy slow march across the grass and on to the sandy roadway by the beach. The thin western starlight grew in strength as they moved away from the hotel.

Before them in the blue-black, gently breathing sea, a few heads bobbed up and down as some bathers took a midnight swim, their voices rising high above the rhythmic rustle of the white waves and the longer sigh of the palms.

Bellamy looked away from the lighted island behind them, with its little toy lighthouse and a big, fat moon above it; away to the east, to the huge cloud build-up in the sky, lit by odd lightning flashes, and beyond that to a black nothingness.

Abruptly, he dropped Lalette's hand and turned away from her. His eyes took in the three different sides of the scene around him, with the lighted hotel, as a massive, glittering centrepiece, sending its sweet music softly over the garden and the beach to the shadowy paths beyond.

Anger mounted inside him: against Sir James for a defeat where there had been no visible battle; against the rest of the Emperor's inhabitants for their smug, blind obedience. He said fiercely: "Puppets . . . all of them!" Then seeing the girl look up at him in surprise, all his pent-up fury seemed to concentrate on her alone, and he added: "You, too!"

She said nothing. Her eyes left his face and dropped downwards to the dry, dark grass round her feet. "In New York . . . damn well falling over themselves to get off the aircraft," Bellamy went on. "And now"—his voice rose above the music, the sighing of the warm breeze through the leaves, the soft shushing of the sea —"they know there's trouble. They're given the chance to get off. And what happens? They fall over themselves to get on." He paused. "*You* included." He stopped again, to let his words sink in, before crying out in irritated exasperation: "Why? That's what I want to know. Why?"

The girl still did not answer. Bellamy, looking down at the slight figure in front of him, saw how taut she was, how high her head was held, the hair glistening fair towards the moonlight, dark towards the storm.

And then, suddenly, as though he understood at last the reason for this anger, the cause and the cure, he reached out to take her small hand in his and, gently pulling her nearer, put his arm round her shoulders and held her close to him.

He could feel the silky smoothness of her bare arms, and smell the newly washed hair against his face. He took hold of her chin in his fingers and turned her face round. Her eyes looked wide and dark in the moonlight, and her mouth had a strange sad softness.

"Don't come tomorrow," he said, much more quietly now.

"Why?"

"Don't you know?"

"No." She hardly moved her mouth when she spoke, and her eyes kept on gravely looking into his.

He moved his head nearer to her own and kissed her. "Not now?"

She drew away from him, and gave a sudden little smile. "Not yet."

He kissed her again. "Now?"

She nodded her head. "Almost."

He put his arms round her, and kissed her slowly and gently. In the shadow of the palm trees between the pink and blue and yellow fairy lights of the hotel garden and the silent ominous illumination in the sky in front, they held to one another in their own moment of quietness and joy.

Then she drew away from him. He looked down at her, and smiled. "Now you know."

"Yes."

"And tomorrow?"

Instinctively, she turned and looked towards the high black plumes of cloud in their tomorrow's sky. She put out her hand and he held it in his. "Now it's my turn," she said.

"To what?"

She stood on tiptoe, and pulled his face down

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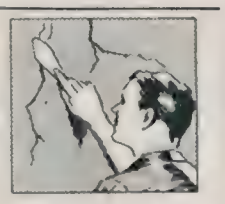

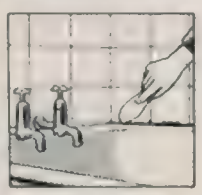

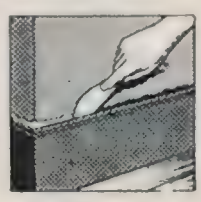

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That note of truth she heard too late . . .

'CHOPSTICKS'—a funny little tune to lead to romance.

It was at a party. Janet was idly picking out the tune on the piano and Ted came in with the harmony. In the weeks that followed, life was all harmony for them, until—dates began to dwindle, there were fewer telephone calls . . . Without a hint of the reason, the romance was over.

Poor Ted was too embarrassed to tell her the truth—that her bad breath was putting him off. It was not until some weeks later, on a routine visit to her dentist, that Janet got a hint of the trouble.

She happened to ask him why she so often woke in the morning with a nasty stale taste in her mouth. 'Morning mouth' her dentist called it, and told her the reason.

WHILE SHE SLEPT

'You see,' he said, 'there are crevices in teeth and gums which harbour tiny scraps of food. These particles decay while you sleep, causing that nasty "bad breath" odour which can last *right through to the evening* if you don't do something about it.' And he recommended Mentasol Toothpaste. The odour-killing chlorophyll in Mentasol reaches the source of odour in seconds, and stops bad breath for hours.

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THE CHLOROPHYLL TOOTHPASTE

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till it was level with her own. "I have to come tomorrow."

"Why?"

She put her lips on his and kissed him. "Don't you know?" she said softly. "Can't you guess . . . ?"

The thunderstorm broke late the next afternoon. Rain poured down. The sharp lines of the Emperor being towed from the hangar were softened by a translucent fur of fuzzy water as the heavy raindrops splashed all over her fuselage. Spasmodic lightning momentarily cracked open the unnatural darkness.

Five small taxis, shiny as black beetles, took the crew and the passengers out to the air terminal. The pilots climbed into the company station-wagon and were taken over to the met. office while the others quietly waited, drinking coffee at the counter, for permission to board the aircraft.

When the pilots came back with the met. folder, Southwaite started on the flight plan at 17,000 feet. Bellamy was again purposely keeping low to avoid the really cold temperatures. The winds were nearly on the beam and of little help, but few cloud build-ups were forecast beyond the thunderstorm over Bermuda. A weak front, dividing the warm air from the cold —that was all.

Sir James asked Bellamy how the weather was. He brightened perceptibly when he heard no cloud was expected above 16,000 feet.

"All set, sir," Southwaite called out, "if you'd care to sign the flight plan. Ten hours, fifty minutes."

Bellamy added his name at the bottom of the sheet. "Well," he said to the crew, "I suppose we might as well get mobile."

The rest of the Emperor's company, under a procession of umbrellas, had already preceded them.

Then everyone was on board and the Emperor moved slowly off on her long journey home.

From where Bellamy and Seawood sat, it was difficult to see anything. Rain danced up and down on the windscreens. Though the wipers clashed to and fro, it still seemed as though the whole aircraft was under water. The wind clutched at the huge tail, banging it this way and that, and her plates shivered as she taxied.

The mile-and-a-quarter long runway, straight as a die, cut off as sharply as a knife, lay before them, the wide, short road to anywhere in the world.

"Emperor Alfa Delta," Seawood said, "is ready to roll."

A voice from far away said: "Alfa Delta is cleared Great Circle to London at seventeen thousand. Climb on course. Report fifty miles out and again at cruising altitude."

Seawood repeated it back. Bellamy's right hand gripped the four throttle levers. Over his shoulder, he called: "Ready for take-off, Mr. Rawlings?" And when the engineer echoed him, he said more quietly to Seawood: "Well . . . here we go!"

THE throttle levers advanced until they were against the stops. Even above the engines the sound of the tyres could be heard swishing over the water-logged runway. Bellamy kept the nose wheel hard on the ground to correct the Emperor's urge to swing to the right as the beam wind tried to weathercock the mainsail-size surface of her tail. Speed quickened into life the feel of her controls.

He pulled the nose wheel off the ground, and pressed harder with his left foot on the rudder pedal. The wet world outside grew farther out of focus. Speed blurred everything. As the airspeed indicator touched 120 knots and the Emperor left the ground, the airfield turned into a pale grey smudge behind her.

Up came the wheels, then the flaps. The uneven turbulence slammed at the Emperor's wings, increasing in ferocity as she slowly climbed into the ill-defined opaque outlines of

The Emperor's controls lay limp and useless. Human elevators had to land her safely. "Another one to the back!" shouted Cavendish. . . . Lalette went aft

clouds that trailed their wispy tentacles down towards the sea.

Then the bottom of the thunderstorm swallowed up the Emperor, and rolled a black-out curtain of steamy-grey down all her windows. The great plane began to climb at over a thousand feet a minute.

Upwards, washed by the cloud, they went until, noiselessly, the nose of the aircraft emerged into the clear again. But it was a new world this time.

They were in a valley, it seemed, surrounded on all sides by immense great billows of smoke. And yet, in an uncanny way, the smoke did not move, as the aircraft plunged in and out of it. Hard, to look at, it gave softly when it was explored; the gloominess only becoming more clammy, the updraughts a little more violent.

And then, suddenly, the mountains and valleys disappeared. Mounting above the clouds, subduing them under her wings, the Emperor climbed into the clear.

Everything on board seemed immediately to go quite still. High above, an immensity of deep blue sky darkened towards the east as night came up from the sea to meet them.

"Seventeen thousand feet," Bellamy said. "Report at cruising altitude. . . ."

With his face pressed hard against the windscreen in front of him, Seawood studied the dark eastern horizon, as he made up their third hourly weather report. "Bit hazy tonight, sir."

"Yes."

"Can't see a damned star ahead." He turned to Bellamy doubtfully. "I suppose it *is* haze, sir . . . not high cloud?"

Bellamy looked up through the Perspex panel over his head. A glitter of tiny pieces of light reassured him of a clear sky above; but the horizons right round the aircraft were indistinct and muzzy.

"Haze," he said.

Then they relapsed into the same silence that had lasted all the previous hour. Bellamy studied the forecast folder on the throttle pedestal beside him. A weak, rather narrow front was marked at longitude 40 West; but the cloud tops were marked clearly at 16,000 feet, one thousand feet below their present altitude.

Not that he took that as gospel. His eyes were continually watching the small round dial on the bottom left-hand corner of the instrument panel where the outside air temperature gauge now registered a placid minus thirteen degrees centigrade, well above the minus forty odd that might have been at the root of the Labrador trouble.

ON this trip he had taken more chances than he cared to think about. He didn't want any more. The responsibility for all on board still weighed on his mind. He had thought over various courses of action, should the boosters start acting up again: but what he most feared was that the gigantic rudder should jam hard over, one side or the other. He was treating the rudder controls with extra special respect, and when Seawood accidentally banged his foot on the left pedal, he gave a quick start.

"Sorry, sir!" Seawood said.

"That's all right." With an effort, Bellamy relaxed and smiled. Seeing the first officer's anxious-to-please face under the fair hair, he was suddenly mindful of how much he took his crew for granted. He rarely chatted to them, as they sat together up at the front, watching the night hours go by. He knew nothing of Seawood, except that he was a good, unobtrusive first officer.

"How long before you get a command?" he asked.

"Oh . . . years and years, sir!"

"Not if the Emperor's a success. Twenty new aircraft ordered. They'll be needing a lot of new captains."

Seawood paused. "I'd thought of that, sir."

"You mean . . . you're not counting your Emperors before they're hatched?"

"Well . . . there've been so many others that were going to be so good. And on this trip——"

"Alfa Delta is only the prototype, don't forget. Not that I'm saying there aren't a few things I'd like to see done. Hot air instead of these antiquated wing de-icing boots. Various little economies done away with."

"And the Mark II boosters fitted?"

Bellamy grinned. "Yes . . . the Mark II boosters, of course. But otherwise she's strong: she's fast: terrific passenger capacity and good engines."

"So you think she'll reach the chairman's expectations?"

"I'm not saying anything more till we reach London. All I'll say now is—your command course mightn't be so long away, after all."

The first officer seemed pleased even to have his name in the same sentence as a captaincy.

"Married?" Bellamy went on.

Seawood said: "Not far off, sir!"

For half an hour they went on talking about the outside world on the ground: about cars: films: living in London. But all the time, Bellamy's eyes were watching the air temperature gauge.

It was going up quite fast. Now it was only

Continued on page 33

Are you getting thin on top?

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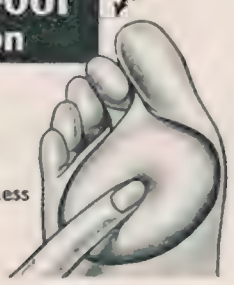

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Jimmy Wheeler's strident success

by JOHN ENNIS

A chaotic show for charity led him into big-money television. As a brash, belligerent comic, he finds that politeness doesn't pay

IN APRIL LAST YEAR, Jimmy Wheeler, the raucous cockney comedian, bounded confidently out before the diamond and white-tie audience at the Savoy Hotel, London. He wore his usual music hall outfit of loud suit, cheeky trilby hat and a false moustache made from a piece of dyed rabbit fur, but he had memorized a sedate routine which he considered suitable for high-class cabaret.

He told the first three polite jokes, and received polite smiles in return. Wheeler's agent, Billy Marsh, sensed disaster. "I wanted to crawl under the table," he says.

Thirty years in variety, however, have taught Wheeler how to overcome polite smiles. He raised his voice and switched rapidly to the act he was going to give the sailors at the Chatham Empire the following week. The audience roared, and the Savoy management booked him for an extra week.

Wheeler is cockney and proud of it. He lives in a twenty-six shillings a week flat in the road where he was born in Battersea, South London. He owns a cottage by Clapham Common, one mile from his flat. He calls the cottage his country residence, and moves there every summer.

Wheeler remembers, as a schoolboy, having a bitter, slogging fight with Ernest Perry, who always sat beside him at Lavender Hill School. Perry became Mayor of Battersea. "And I became the uncrowned king," says Wheeler.

At forty-five, Wheeler is being paid £300 for each of a series of monthly Saturday night shows for B.B.C. television. His contract, for two years with an option on a further three at higher payments, is one of the first big-money contracts signed by the B.B.C. since competition with commercial television began forcing up prices. If it runs its full five-year course, Wheeler will draw £28,000. Already his television appearances have sent his name to the top of music hall bills, and he is about to tour with his own show. "I should stay at the top for the next five years," he said recently. "Then I'll retire." His wife says he hopes to become landlord of a country pub.

WHEELER, burly and belligerent, has a brash, aggressive way of fighting his way out of trouble, as he did at the Savoy. One Monday night in 1950, his inclination was to turn and run as he stood in the wings of the Glasgow Empire.

In the best conditions, a cockney comedian can expect little understanding or sympathy from a Scottish audience. On this night conditions were at their worst. Six Italian clowns held the stage. They played most musical instruments, some two at a time. They beat drums, fired guns. "The audience were paralysed," says Wheeler, "and I was supposed to go straight on after all that and stand still and talk."

As loud applause brought the clowns back for repeated curtain calls, Wheeler made a swift, somewhat unethical decision which he hoped the Italians would accept as an old English custom. He followed the clowns as they ran out for their last call, stayed behind as they left the stage and began his act on their applause.

"I'm just holding the stage while they go out for a barrel of gunpowder," he said. "Then they'll blow up the whole place." This, he says, brought him his first big laugh in Scotland.

The clowns agreed to allow him to begin his act each night in the same way. "I was a success," says Wheeler. "Six months later I went back to Glasgow with a big head. I played to a deathly silence."

Though his television experience goes back twenty-four years to a five-guinea session of

Wheeler's first television payment totalled five guineas. Now he has joked and fought his way to £300 for every time he appears

The singing Tanner Sisters tease Wheeler over his new moustache. He grew it to make him look like his stage self—as he wasn't being recognized in the street

flickering experiments with John Logie Baird, Wheeler gained his big-money B.B.C. contract as the indirect result of a chaotic show he gave for charity.

Ted Ray and Wheeler are old friends. Each is a comedian who plays a violin. Some time ago they were invited to do a double act at a midnight charity matinée at the London Palladium.

From Brighton, where he was working that week, Wheeler wrote to Ray. They talked one day over lunch at the Savage Club. On the day of the performance, Wheeler went to the Palladium to rehearse but found that Ray was busy with his radio show. Wheeler went off to do his show at Brighton and arrived back at the Palladium at 11.30 p.m., ready to talk over the act with Ray in the dressing-room. Forty others, including the Crazy Gang, were using the dressing-room. They tried the washroom, then gave up. "I'll meet you," said Ray, "in the centre of the stage. And the best of luck."

When they did meet, their impromptu performance became a memorable theatrical occasion. They were invited to repeat it at a show given by the Water Rats, the theatrical benevolent society; Ronnie Waldman, head of B.B.C. television variety, saw this televised and sent for Wheeler. The contract followed.

Wheeler's highly developed instinct for survival had its strongest test when his father, with whom he worked a double act for years, suddenly lost his memory as they were due on the stage.

"It's the worst thing in the world to tell the manager your partner doesn't know who he is," says Wheeler. "I dragged the old man on, spoke his lines as well as my own, blustered about, played my violin, and dragged him off. A doctor gave him some tablets. Next morning was Tuesday, and he wanted to know what had happened to Monday."

Wheeler was born Ernest Remnant in Battersea in 1910. His father was part of a double act, Wheeler and Wilson, who took the name from a firm of sewing machine manufacturers, and billed themselves "Wheeler and Wilson—Not Singers." While still at school, Ernest won a clog dancing competition and played one of the urchins in *Casey's Court*. He was taught the violin at school for one shilling a week.

His father's partner died in 1923. For four years Ernest helped the family finances by selling newspapers, playing in pubs and running dances at the local baths for a profit of thirty shillings to be shared between him and the pianist. He landed a part as a juryman in *The Trial of Mary Dugan*, but he lost this job after falling asleep in court on a warm summer evening. He lasted longer in *The Life and Adventures of Charles Peace*, in which John Ellis, then public executioner, played an authentic hangman.

In 1927 he joined his father in the old routine, and became Jimmy Wheeler. They toured South Africa, where they were paid in golden sovereigns. The sovereigns, sold at an inflated price after Britain went off the Gold Standard, saw Wheeler and his wife through the depression.

In Africa, Wheeler took his father on a shooting expedition. With Keith Devon, who is now partner to Wheeler's agent, and Mrs. Devon, they drove across the veld in a hired car. Wheeler pulled up when he spotted a zebra, a camel, a white horse and an elephant grazing together. "Get the guns, we're in big-game country," said Wheeler. Just in time they were restrained by the circus proprietor who owned the animals.

Returning to Durban, Wheeler failed to see a train crossing his path until shouts from the others made him swing his steering wheel to drive, for a while, alongside an engine driver cursing in Afrikaans. Some years later at a swimming pool in Barking, London, Wheeler, a skilled swimmer, told Devon that diving was easy. "Bounce once on the springboard, then dive in," he explained. Devon did so, but stayed underwater. Wheeler followed and found Devon unconscious on the bottom of the pool. He dragged him out by the hair. After a while, Devon came round and looked at Wheeler. His first words were: "That's the second time you've tried to kill me."

Wheeler was still working with his father in 1949 when, at the Grand Theatre, Brighton, he filled a gap in the show by doing a short solo turn. Hetty King, the veteran star, was on the same bill. Impressed, she telephoned Billy Marsh. Marsh went to see Wheeler's act and added £20 to the £80 a week that Wheeler and Wilson were paid. Wheeler developed the act on tour, and soon afterwards appeared at the London Palladium. His father retired to become his manager.

For years, Wheeler has played in pantomime each Christmas, and pantomime has brought him his most hectic experiences. At Nottingham in 1953, as Simple Simon, he had to shoot up to the stage through a trapdoor. One night two inexperienced men handled the lift. Wheeler stood on the small platform below the stage, and the men jerked the ropes that moved it upwards without first sliding back the trapdoor above. Wheeler, rapidly compressed between two boards, was knocked out.

Three years earlier, Wheeler came near to being killed in a pantomime accident at Newcastle. He played a henpecked king, with Sonnie Hale as his queen. In a haunted bedroom scene, Wheeler had to pull a bellrope. This should have tipped shavings and plaster on his head from a box hanging above. On the opening night he pulled the rope and the box came down. It weighed twelve pounds and it fell forty feet on to his head.

Wheeler fell off the bed on the far side. Hale wondered where he had gone. Laughter from the audience turned to screams when Wheeler crawled from behind the bed with blood running down his face. He was saved from the full force of the blow by a wig, a bowler hat and a metal crown he was wearing.

The show's manager lifted the wig, slapped on a piece of sticking plaster, replaced the wig and pushed Wheeler on for the finale. Wheeler sat drinking brandy while a doctor stitched his wound and the manager pleaded with him to recover in time to play the second house as there was no understudy.

Since he began working alone, Wheeler has climbed steadily. After a woman, following an operation, burst her stitches while laughing at him in a theatre in Stockport, Cheshire, he took out an insurance policy against anybody dying of laughter while watching him.

He was a little puzzled, on becoming nationally known through television, to find himself ignored in the street or when he dropped into a public house. A naturally gregarious man, he was worried for a while by this isolation. Then he realized that, without the rabbit-fur moustache, he was going about disguised from his fans.

Early this year he grew a real moustache. "Now," he says, "perhaps somebody will ask me for my autograph." THE END

JOHN BULL PHOTOGRAPHS BY ARTHUR WHITTINGTON

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EPSOM

Apron strings

Continued from page 8

nothing, only stared and stared. And I remembered that there was no beach beneath the cliff. There would be broken water down there, sucking and heaving, the waves smashing themselves against the sandstone.

The cockleshell was already nearly out of sight below the curve of the overhang. It appeared to poise, as if trying to give us a last glimpse of it, and then it was swept farther in, vanishing beneath that great curtain of the cliff.

God forbid that I ever know again the helplessness of that moment. I went on staring at the empty sea, doing nothing, because there was nothing to do, and saying nothing, because I could find no words.

Susan spoke. Her voice was a whisper. "Oh, Harry, I sent him out there."

I think she was too dazed to break down. It had all happened so suddenly. Her eyes were fixed and disbelieving, and filled me with such aching pity that I had to glance away from them. Above the cliff face the gulls were rising and screaming in a vile chorus.

I stood there, trying to close my mind against the inevitable happening below, against the thought of those struggling boys being pounded and beaten against the rocks, their strength crushed out of them, the sea filling their lungs and drawing them under. I was trying to find some sentence of comfort for Susan, but the futility of words still held me dumb.

Susan said: "I won't believe it. I can't. No! They're alive. They must be. They've got to be!" She went on with a sudden, deadly calm: "There'll be ledges there. Ledges and platforms of rock. They'll have scrambled up . . . we must get ropes.

"D'you hear me?" she shouted. "Run to the lighthouse. They're bound to have ropes there."

I looked at her keenly. Her control seemed dangerous. But she read that look on my face and said: "You needn't worry. I'll simply wait here."

I dashed across and through the gateway of the whitewashed wall surrounding the lighthouse garden. I knew two of the chaps there, Yates and Milburn.

Yates was digging in a vegetable patch. In a few sentences I told him the story.

"Poor kids," he said shortly. "Not a hope. Likely we'll find what's left of them on Panswick sands when tide's gone down. Current runs that way." He left his fork and started for

the main buildings. "I'll ring through for the lifeboat."

I said: "What about ropes? We've just got to do something——"

"Aye. We've got them."

"You don't think there's a ghost of a chance?"

"Not unless the Almighty has decided so," said Yates bleakly.

He went in and came out with Milburn and another man. Two of them carried a heavy coil of rope. The third had a hand-line, a massive iron peg and a weighty mallet, the sort we call a mell, ringed with metal.

In silence we tramped across to Susan, who was now kneeling by the edge. At our approach she jumped up. The wind was whisking her hair about her cheeks. She was still unnaturally calm. It must have amazed those other chaps to see her like that.

Yates coughed and began to drive the iron peg into the ground. Milburn and his companion were carefully checking the rope. I noticed that they kept their faces averted. The wind was stronger now, blustering over the headland with a booming noise. From below rose the thudding of waves meeting the cliff, and the hissing of spume.

Yates and the other two were ready. Susan seized the end of the rope. She said: "I'm the one to go." When I jumped to take it away from her she cried: "Oh, but I must! If Pete's very scared, I can steady him. I must go to him. . . ."

I saw Milburn swallow quickly. As for me, there leaped abruptly into my mind a warning. Susan wanted to be lowered so that the moment she was below the overhang she could see whether life still mattered to her. If she saw nothing but the naked rock and the empty sea, she might simply let go herself. There would be nothing left to live for.

I felt a sudden, violent anger with myself—anger for my own lumbering inadequacy. Fool that I was, I'd never really told Susan what I felt for her. For the past two years I'd been around, worshipping her inside myself, but always expecting a sign from her.

I knew now that it should have come from me, that she needed someone like me; that, womanlike, she had given me every opportunity to declare myself, and that I had failed her.

I took the rope and began to loop it about my waist. I said: "Susan, listen to me. I've done a deal of this sort of thing on the fells. I'm better at it than you. Stay here. It won't be long to wait now."

She gave me a searching, stricken glance, and her lips started to tremble. "Take care of yourself."

"I will that, love."

I gripped her small hand, then turned away. Yates said: "One tug on the hand-line when you want to stop. Two for lowering farther. Three to be hauled up."

He and Milburn and the other chap took the strain. My feet slid over the edge. My hands scrabbled slowly downwards against the projecting curve of the overhang. A gull veered up from a boss of rock, screaming harshly.

Beneath my feet I could see the base of the overhang drawing nearer, and the grey and white eddying of the sea. I kept telling myself that presently, when they hauled me up, she still might refuse to accept the truth. We might have to drag her away. . . .

Then, as the rope lowered me below the base of the overhang, I let out a yell that scared a milling cloud of gulls. On a jagged shelf of sandstone just above the sea, the spray leaping up at them in showers, crouched two figures.

Five long minutes later, I was with the two boys, pressing myself against the rock-face, freeing the rope from my waist.

Peter, soaked and blue with cold, had panic in his eyes, and yet his childish mouth showed a kind of determination. His hand was gripping Jack's clothing, not holding on to him, but holding him on.

Then I saw the strange angle of Jack's leg sticking out over the shelf. And Jack said through chattering teeth: "Managed to jump as the boat crashed; but I've broken something."

"Get him up first," said Peter, in the voice of a child grappling with terror.

Roped, the agile Jack managed well enough with one leg and two hands. It took quite a while to haul him up, but at last I was sending Peter on his way; and, when they finally hauled me over the edge, Peter was at the rear of the rope, pulling with the men.

There was a kind of stubborn concentration about him and a hint of pride. His mother stood behind him, her arms about him, her hands over his, her face against his cheek.

Then I was on firm ground and Susan was beside me, crying and smiling at the same time. Her hands slid around my neck and, as she looked up at me, I thought I had never seen her so beautiful.

She said shakily: "When they started to lower you, my courage gave out. If anything had happened and I'd lost you both. . . ." Her face pressed against my shoulder.

My arm went right round her. "You've been alone too long," I heard myself saying. "We both have. But that's all over now." THE END

The new Australian

Continued from page 19

Vic, and she saw no advantage in offending her uncle just yet.

Vic waved from the hillside, where he was hoeing in new plants. The old man frowned darkly up, and quickly beckoned us inside the shed. He glared at Ruth, lines angrily deep-cut on either side of his mouth.

"Don't want you talkin' to that feller," he said. "Gawd, if your dad was alive, he'd tan the hide off you."

Ruth gave him a hurt, angry glance. He wouldn't call Vic down, claiming there was work to do, and so, defiantly, we went up the mountain.

Old Crusoe came along too. Obviously he wasn't going to let Ruth and Vic meet anywhere without keeping an eye on them.

In minutes we were beside Vic on the slope, trying to keep in the mottled cool spots under the leaves. Vic smiled a greeting, but he was tired. He was sweating a lot, with dirt, mingled with the sweat, streaking his face and chest. Strips of sacking were tied round his ankles against snakes, a dirty handkerchief fluttered down his neck from an old battered hat, and his singlet hung wetly over khaki shorts.

The injustice of it seemed suddenly stark now, and Ruth whipped round on the old man.

"What are you trying to do?" she cried, "ruin his profession? You know hoeing ruins his hands."

"Ruth——" Vic said.

"It's all right, Vic," she said tightly. "We're going to have this out now. We've waited long enough."

She turned to face the old man. "I think it's time you knew, Uncle Matt, that Vic and I intend to get married."

Old Crusoe's face underwent a slow change; the cigarette shook in his mouth as he whispered: "You don't know what you're sayin', girl."

"It's true," Vic said. "And there's nothing so wrong with me marrying Ruth, is there? I just want to settle down here as you did, that's all. If you'd give me a chance . . . trust me. . . ."

"Trust a foreigner?" The old man threw the cigarette aside contemptuously. "You think I want foreigners runnin' around in *my* family?

"I built up this plantation with my own two hands, and now it's rich. I know what's in your mind. You people think you can come here from poverty-stricken places and fall into the lap of luxury. Well, you damn well can't!"

"You sponsored me," Vic said heavily, "because I was cheap labour. You never liked me from the first because I was foreign, but you'd take me because I saved you money; you don't have to pay me as much as you would an Australian.

"You never troubled to find out what kind of a man I am. Good or bad, you didn't know, and you still don't know. You told yourself you'd hate me, and you do." He paused and, surprisingly, he smiled. "But I don't hate you, old man, and your hatred isn't going to drive me away—or stop me marrying Ruth."

"Why, you——"

Matt Crusoe's fury erupted in a violent forward lunge. Ruth screamed. We both rushed forward, but Vic stepped quickly aside and the old man went stumbling down the slope. A plant broke his fall and he lay straddled across it, eyes wide and hard with hate.

We stood watching him, for the moment not knowing what to do. Then suddenly Vic grabbed the hoe and ran slithering down the slope. When he reached Matt, he began beating wildly about his feet with the hoe.

Then we saw the writhing brown form in the sun, twisting and coiling and beating its tail on the earth. Vic battered it frenziedly; the snake's back was broken with the first blow, but he kept on till it was completely lifeless, and then he picked it up and threw it away.

The old man got up shakily and began to climb up to the wire boundary fence. Vic followed him quickly, anxiously. He said: "Were you bitten?"

"Get away from me. I'll show you how I treat snakebite." The old man pushed him roughly aside, bared his bitten arm, held it above the barbed-wire fence, and drew it down and along, till blood came.

"You fool!" Vic shouted.

"You don't know anything," the old man muttered, and stumbled back down the mountain to the packing shed.

Vic watched him go, breathing hard. "The fool," he muttered, "the damned old fool."

Ruth caught his arm anxiously. "What was it Vic?"

"I don't know. It was brown, could've been anything, copperhead, death-adder. I don't know."

We went back down the slope, and found the old man rubbing crystals into the wound. Vic said: "What was it?"

"Get out of my sight. You're through. Go where you like—forget about the agreement. I'll not have foreigners muckin' up my family."

"Was it a copperhead?" Vic yelled at him. "Stop rubbing that stuff in! What do you want—gangrene?"

"How should I know what it was? I'll be okay without your help. Been through this before. . . . Hey, what are you doing?"

"Ruth! Get some hot water and clean cloth. Jimmy, take the truck and see if you can get some antiseptics and anti-venine in Murwillumbah."

"I'll be *okay*!" the old man

protested. But the same afternoon he became sick.

Vic and Ruth forced him to bed while I drove into town for the anti-septics. The old man had demanded a registered doctor, but Ruth and I knew Vic was fighting for more than life alone.

Later, when Vic had administered the anti-venine, Ruth stayed with old Matt in the packing shed. There was nothing more Vic or I could do, so we went back to the hut and sat smoking.

"How will he be?" I asked.

"I don't know."

"He won't die?"

"I hope not. I hope not for Ruth's sake and mine, as well as his own." Vic sighed wearily. "If he dies, I could never be really happy with Ruth. He'd always be with us, disapproving, hating me."

We sat there all night, with the hut door open. We could see the lantern-glow by the old man's bed in the packing shed. It was pitch dark, and the lantern seemed a low star in the sky. And it was quiet. There were no birds in the trees, no wind, and the frogs were silent in the swamp.

Then in minutes, it seemed, dawn was born and grown. Pale grey light rushed silently over the mountain and spilled into the valley, and a soft wind moved in the trees. We were dull and tired with the waiting, and coffee only made our tongues thick. The packing shed lantern was out, so we got up, feeling it was not so much the beginning of the day, as the end of the night.

When we saw Ruth moving about in the shed, we went across. She came towards us, pressing a finger to her lips for silence.

"Sleeping," she whispered.

The old head on the pillow was turned away from us. Vic took a deep quivering breath. "How is he?" he asked.

"The fever broke before dawn. I think he'll sleep awhile."

"No he won't." Matt Crusoe turned suddenly in bed, and tried to sit up.

Ruth gave a little cry, and ran to him. "Uncle Matt, you lie down!"

"I want to talk to that feller Krusty." The old man was weak, but his eyes narrowed testily. "Where the devil is he? Never around when he's wanted."

Vic said: "I'm here."

"Oh." The old man lay back. He was silent a long time.

AT last he said: "You know what, Krusty. Last night, I thought I was dying. My arm hurt like hell an' I was all hot an' cold, shivered all the time. I got to thinking about the plantation, and Ruthie . . . and you. And I could see it. I could see the people from your country and other countries flooding the place, an' all the big towns—Brisbane, Sydney, Melbourne—getting bigger and bigger with you people, till you came farther inland and swamped over the farms and plantations.

"An' I still thought—like I'd always thought—to hell with them, coming here, cluttering up the place and pinching our girls. We Australians don't want any outsiders around." He broke off and looked up at Vic. "But, you know what?"

"What?" Vic said softly.

"This morning, when I knew I wasn't going to die, I felt different. It seemed to me that maybe we Australians aren't that independent after all. At any rate there's one still alive and kicking that wouldn't have been if he hadn't had a foreigner around. An' I thought: maybe there's some good in that damned lot after all."

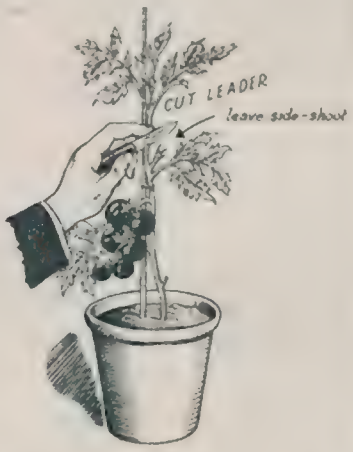
Vic said: "Why don't you try finding out some time?" He was smiling now.

The old man was silent a long time. Then he said: "Sure! I'll do that. But first I think I'll get me some more sleep."

I thought Ruth was going to cry. She turned to attend the old man again, to hide her face. I went back with Vic to the hut to wait for her, and when she came in I knew they didn't want me any more, so I said goodbye. THE END

Your garden and mine

by PERCY THROWER



INSTEAD of letting my indoor tomato plants grow unchecked I cut out the leader after the first truss has set. Growth is then taken on by a side shoot, which is also stopped after fruit has formed. The plant will reach only half its normal height, but will conserve energy for developing fruit.—*T. Galpin, Sutton Coldfield, Warwickshire.*

When my runner beans produce flowers I sprinkle them with a solution of sugar and water. Bees are soon attracted, and pollination is increased.—*F. Rowberry, Barnwood Road, Gloucester.*

PERCY THROWER says: If the single leaders of indoor tomatoes are allowed to grow they develop too much fruit at once. Stopping the plants helps to spread ripening over a longer period and encourages plants to bear later fruit.

It is often difficult to get the earliest runner bean flowers to set, especially in dry weather. Gardeners spray them with water, because moisture helps in the fertilization of the blossom. The more bees that can be attracted, the better; sugar water would undoubtedly encourage them, particularly in built-up areas.

JOHN BULL *pays five guineas each for the best original, topical gardening hints sent to Percy Thrower,* JOHN BULL, *189 High Holborn, London, W.C.1. No entry can be returned unless a stamped, self-addressed envelope is enclosed.*

The proving flight

Continued from page 27

minus nine degrees. Not a very good temperature, if they should run into cloud, and ice started to form. . . .

In the passenger cabin it was the quietest dinner ever. Though outside in the clear black night the engines hummed on steadily eastwards, there was rarely a sound in the body of the plane.

The catering staff was serving the meal. The footfalls of Chief Steward Hamilton were muffled by the thick pink pile of the carpet in the aisle. Angela's voice, as she went round with the wine, was almost down to a whisper. When Payton dropped a fork that clattered down among the plastic plates, at least three heads turned quickly round to see what had happened.

Only the hydraulic pump, unaffected by atmosphere, let out its thin whine whenever the system's reservoirs needed replenishing.

Even Sir James was well on with his sweet before he spoke. Then, perhaps remembering his obligations as a host, he turned to Brocklehurst, and said quietly: "Comfortable?"

"Very." The under-secretary was still picking at his steak.

"I've noticed you're not eating much. Food all right?"

"Delicious!"

"I can recommend the hock."

But as Brocklehurst showed no signs of being tempted, he changed the subject. "Very pleasant at Bermuda, I thought."

"Extremely so."

"But pleasanter still to be homebound. On schedule. Eh?"

Brocklehurst said nothing. Instead, he looked at his watch, which he had never altered from English time. Past midnight.

It was another day already in London, and here they were still having dinner. His wife would be sleeping alone under the green satin eiderdown of their enormous mahogany bed, while he sat in his seat, with three hours and fifty minutes gone, and another seven hours to go.

He could not fail to notice the air of expectancy in the cabin, as everyone watched and waited. Turning to the chairman, he asked: "You did say the weather was good?"

"Not a cloud above us all the way . . . Bellamy told me. This is the fair weather route."

Up at the front, past the flight-deck door that divided the dark and the light, in the dim navigation compartment, Southwaite was taking a sight through the periscopic sextant. Nearer to the nose, Hooper took off his headphones to grumble at Rawlings: "Hell of a lot of static, tonight."

But Rawlings was quite satisfied with the calm faces of the dials in front of him. "Engines are bang on."

The radio officer turned to look at Bellamy and Seawood, still talking side by side at the front. "Pilots seem to be having no trouble."

"No trouble at all."

Suddenly, a very slight vibration shook the flight-deck floor. From Southwaite came an exasperated "Damn!"

Hooper half-jumped from his seat. "What's up, Alex? What's up?"

The navigator's head appeared from behind the mask of the sextant. He rubbed his hand over his screwed-up eyes. "Damned star just went phut in my face. . . ."

Cavendish had seen the cloud from the rest compartment, where he had been eating a solitary dinner. He walked up to the front and stood between the two pilots. He said: "There seems more in that weak front than they forecast, Captain Bellamy."

"Yes. I've been watching the temperature going up over the last hour." He pointed it out. Only minus seven. "Might have to climb . . . if we get any ice."

"One thing," Cavendish said in a reassuring tone, "if we do have to go up, in this warm air, we won't get anywhere near minus forty."

"I'd have gone up anyway. Except there's that cold air on the other side of the front." Bellamy turned to Seawood. "You go back and have dinner now."

The first officer carefully got out of the right-hand seat. Just as carefully, Cavendish settled his huge bulk down on the cushion, as soon as it was vacant. Bellamy was looking up through the panel, hoping to see a star or two to prove this sudden darkness was just ragged, unimportant layer cloud. But there was nothing. Only solid blackness, and the tiny reflection of the instrument lighting on the glass.

Cavendish peered out into the night. "This haze makes things difficult. Mind if we have all the lights out?"

"Go ahead."

Cavendish pulled the curtain behind the pilots tight shut. Then he turned out the tiny glow over the instruments. Only the phosphorescent numbers and needles stood out now.

CAVENDISH still kept staring ahead. He said suddenly. "Isn't that a cumulus head?"

Bellamy looked up. "Where? Can't see anything."

"No." Cavendish relaxed a little. "Impossible to tell, really. Pitch black outside. Just thought I caught a shadow that was blacker than the rest."

"All the same," Bellamy said, "I don't like it. I think we'll climb."

"Temperature still going up?"

Bellamy was just about to answer, when a sudden overwhelming clatter of ice and rain broke in a great splintering mass over the nose. In two seconds, the windscreens changed from black to white.

Cavendish shouted: "Clear ice!"

It was as though an iceberg had disintegrated on top of them. Though the pilots had immediately switched on all the alcohol anti-icers, all the windows were tightly bandaged up. Nothing could be seen but wet, shining whiteness.

Bellamy knew he had to act quickly, before the whole aircraft was suffocated. He said to Cavendish as he pulled back on the stick: "Let's get out of here!"

Cavendish put his hands on the control column and moved it even farther towards him. The rate of climb shot up. Bellamy went back to tell Hooper to get a clearance to 25,000.

Unseeing, blinded by ice, Alfa Delta's nose rose up steeply as she started a powerful leap upwards through the freezing air. As Bellamy stood impatiently beside the radio officer, still keeping an eye on the temperature gauge, Cavendish edged the control column farther back, anxious to shake off the icy, clinging fingers of the cloud, to get up into the colder, drier air where the ice would lessen.

The Emperor responded magnificently. Her propellers slashed through the stuff, sending it clanging in great chunks against her metal sides. The altimeter needle never wavered as it clocked in each thousand feet of height gained. The vibration inside the aircraft increased.

Bellamy came back to the front for a moment. "All right?" he asked Cavendish.

The older man pointed to the altimeter, already at 22,000 feet. "Climbing well."

Then Hooper called out: "Got clearance, sir"; and Bellamy felt that the sudden crisis was over. They would probably be clear of cloud now, if they could see out. The tension on the flight deck relaxed as he went aft to the navigation compartment.

Alone in the curtained-off tip of the nose, Cavendish relaxed his tight grip of the stick. The needle on the altimeter was still gaily turning. They were past 24,000 now. Only another thousand feet to go—they'd done it easily.

He watched the pointer pass the new altitude. Then he eased gently forward on the control column.

Nothing happened. Only the altimeter moved—up and up, past 26,000, pressing on tirelessly to 27,000.

Very slightly harder, he pushed

Continued on page 36

PLEASURE—I

Some miss many pleasures through caring too much for comforts.

Viscount Samuel

Amazing safety of new tubeless tyres made even greater by

HIGH-TENACITY RAYON

THE astonishing resistance of the new tubeless tyres to blowouts and punctures owes much to the great strength of High-Tenacity Rayon Cord. These new tyres, like most tyres on the road today, are made with this amazingly strong Tyre Cord.

It was first developed by Courtaulds in 1936, and in 1942 large-scale expansion took place to meet the urgent demands of war. Since then, the resistance to fatigue of Courtaulds Rayon Cord has been greatly increased, and its strength improved by as much as 30%. Every year, more and more rayon tyres are in use, covering more millions of miles in safety. Today, High-Tenacity Rayon Cord is acknowledged to be the world's leading tyre cord.

You're *safer* when you ride on RAYON!

Thousands of families

now relax with this extra

motoring safeguard

SAFETY COMES FROM THE INSIDE

What are tyres made of? Rubber, of course, but that's not all. Inside the rubber are layers of reinforcing textile; and in 95% of bus, car and lorry tyres, whether tubeless or standard, this textile is High-Tenacity Rayon. High-Tenacity Rayon is very strong indeed, yet flexible; it stands up to the stress and temperature of high-speed motoring with far reduced risk of breakdown. It gives greater safety, and adds extra mileage to tyre life.

COURTAULDS HIGH-TENACITY RAYON —
THE WORLD'S LEADING TYRE CORD

forward on the control column. It still didn't move. Incredulously, he looked to see if the automatic pilot was engaged. But all the levers were back. Out.

He pushed forward again much harder. The metal stick quivered a little under the pressure. But it stayed where it was.

Then his eye caught the altimeter reading. They were still shooting upwards, just passing 28,000.

Settling himself lower in the seat, with all his might he strained against the control column. But he could not shift it. Sweat began to pour down his face. He leaned his whole big body against the damned thing. Still nothing gave.

He turned his head and called: "Captain Bellamy!"

Bellamy came up to the front immediately and leaped into the left-hand seat. "What's the trouble?"

"These damned elevators!"

Bellamy tried them. Both pilots pushed together. "Stuck solid!" Then Bellamy saw the reading on the altimeter: 31,000 feet and still going up.

Cavendish said: "I think it's ice over the hinges of the elevators. Jammed them solid in the up position."

"Hope to God it's not the boosters," Bellamy said.

CAVENDISH tried the emergency position; but there was no change. Only the windscreens were altering: the alcohol had eaten away the ice, clearing a hole in the centre through which the stars shone, bright and alive around them. But they could also see the lumps of jagged ice, inches thick on the wings.

Bellamy put his hands on the throttles. Very cautiously, he was bringing them back. Cavendish said: "For God's sake, don't stall her!"

"We've *got* to stop her climbing."

At the best of times the Emperor's stall was vicious and sudden. In this nose-up altitude, with the elevators locked, what would happen was best not thought about.

They had passed 34,000 feet now but, as the power from the engines was reduced, they were slowing up. Bellamy eased back the four levers just a fraction farther.

And then, suddenly, with no warning at all, a great shudder ran through the whole aircraft. She quivered and wobbled like a giant jelly. Bellamy slammed all the throttles into the take-off position. He yelled to the crew: "Strap yourselves in!" and switched on the passenger seat belt sign.

The trembling continued. The Emperor tottered at the top of the sky, trying to make up her mind what to do. Her metal plates seemed to go mad and melt into a shivering, clanging mass of metal.

And then, only seconds after the first tremors but like years to Bellamy, she gave up the ghost. The juddering ceased abruptly. With a whimper, the huge nose dropped. The navigator's pencils bounced off the table. As though suddenly deprived of all air to fly in, Emperor Alfa Delta plunged like a stone down towards the sea. . . .

Payton was the only one in the passenger cabin to notice the seat belt sign come on. Immediately, he felt for the webbing straps.

But it was too late. Before he could fasten them, the aircraft had lurched forward at an alarming angle. He was hurled against the seat in front. Tightly he clung to the strawberry-pink upholstery; while the others, caught more unawares, were spilled like dice on the floor in all sorts of attitudes.

Eastlake had crashed over two seats, and was upside-down with his legs in the air. The chairman hung grimly on to the arm of the vacant chair across the aisle. Brocklehurst had smashed his face hard against the porthole. Hamilton, who was standing up at the time, was knocked nearly unconscious against the rear bulkhead.

After the first cries of surprise, nobody said anything. Unsure whether they were upside-down or sideways, they lay where they had been thrown. Cruttwell had a gash right down his cheek that was now red and bleeding. The two girls, flattened on the galley floor, had their eyes tight closed.

They were all in such unlikely attitudes that there could now be no remedy. They knew they were going downwards. The engines were curiously soft; but a gale seemed to whine and howl against the fuselage.

But this descending motion was not an unpleasant sensation. As the seconds went by they became, one by one, past being afraid. An inability to do anything anyway made them lie there passive, warm, comfortable even in the mêlée of bodies around them, waiting for whatever power there was that controlled these things to do what it wished with them.

The seconds stretched into minutes. They were still going down. And now they were turning. Lalette and Angela began to feel giddy and sick. Their eyes watered. Their heads went round and round. Everyone was conscious that somewhere, at some time soon, the air must end with the hard surface of the sea.

But the minutes passed, and nothing happened. Up at the front, strapped in their seats, both pilots fought to make the Emperor recover.

Bellamy yelled: "Is she spinning?"

Cavendish shouted back: "God knows!"

Bellamy flung himself against the control column with all his might. "These damned elevators! Won't shift an inch!"

The Emperor, descending now past seven thousand feet, had lost more than three miles in height. She seemed to have forgotten all sense of behaving like an aeroplane.

Bellamy called out: "She's turning to the left again. I'm trying power on the port engines. Throttle back the starboards."

The nose steadied a little. The speed built up. Then up on her right wing she went. The altimeter needle unwound past three thousand feet. There was half a mile of air left before the cold waters of the Atlantic began.

In a last desperate effort to right her, Bellamy tried take-off power on the starboard side, none on the port. Full rudder was already jammed hard on.

The aircraft went down another thousand feet. But she was descending more slowly. Bellamy saw the speed build up. Abruptly the turning ceased. All judderings stopped. He banged the four throttle levers wide open, and at last he felt life flowing back into the rudders and ailerons. The Emperor seemed to stop quite still for a moment. A calm descended over the whole of her fuselage. And then she roared majestically up into the night.

She reached six thousand feet before either of the pilots spoke. Then Cavendish observed dryly: "This aircraft continues to astonish me, Captain Bellamy."

Bellamy could still feel the emptiness inside him; the hard hammering of his heart. He turned his sweat-soaked face towards the older pilot. He said: "She has her moments."

He saw Cavendish was smiling, the unperturbed, patient smile of long experience with fractious aeroplanes. He said: "On top of her other virtues . . . what do we find but a remarkable gift for aerobatics."

In spite of himself, Bellamy smiled back. His mind had been a blank over what he was going to do, still stunned by that terrifying spiral through the sky. Cavendish looked completely calm, as though he had been immunized against any feelings of near-disaster. His indomitable attitude, as he sat in the right-hand seat unmoved and unshaken, was in itself an immense, encouraging comfort.

Bellamy said: "She'll be wanting to do an encore . . . if we don't watch out."

"I'd been thinking about that."

"It can't be ice now." Bellamy banged at the elevator control column, still stuck fast. "We got way below the freezing level." He took out his torch and shone it on the wing. "Not a sign of the stuff out there now."

"It was ice to begin with. Then I fancy when we got beyond 33,000 feet the elevator booster cylinders contracted in the cold temperatures. And jammed the pistons."

"Thank God the rudders didn't join them." Bellamy bent over the throttle levers, bringing back the power on the engines. There was a greater feeling of security, now they had some height beneath them. "We've got to get the nose down somehow."

They talked it over while the aircraft climbed slowly and steadily up into the clear sky. The front was behind them now and they were flying in a cold airstream from the north. When they had agreed on a course of action, Bellamy climbed out of his seat and went aft. He had a word with Southwaite, Hooper and Seawood. The first officer opened up a hatch in the floor for them, and all three disappeared into the baggage compartment.

Immediately Bellamy came back through the cabin, the chairman called out: "What's happened, Bellamy, What's wrong?"

The pilot told them all as briefly as possible. Then he explained what they intended to do. "As you can guess, the important thing is to stop climbing. All the same, we're going up to 19,000 feet, where we'll get a reasonable speed and where the upward effect of the elevators won't be so great. We can't go higher, in case it's colder."

He paused, looking at the anxious faces around him. "But, fortunately, the Emperor is very sensitive on fore and aft trim. All the cargo in the holds is now being moved forward. I want you to bring everything movable in the cabin and the galley up front. And then come up yourselves, too. We want every available pound we can get crammed into the nose. That way we may be able to balance out the up effect of the elevators."

Everyone in the cabin set to with a will, glad at last to be able to do something to help themselves, pushing and pulling everything that would move as far forward as they could. In a forlorn hope, Bellamy sent Rawlings and Eastlake back into the tail cone to see if they could do anything about the jammed booster cylinders.

THEY were down there fifteen minutes. By the time they returned, dirty and dusty, all the other inhabitants of the Emperor were squeezed tightly together on the flight deck.

"Manage to do anything?" Bellamy asked them from the left-hand seat.

Eastlake shook his head. "Nothing."

But there he was wrong. By moving their combined weight of 331 pounds from the tip of the tail to the front of the nose they achieved at last the balance that had been wanting. The altimeter stopped turning. Throttled back a little, certainly, and in rather a begging attitude, Alfa Delta was, nevertheless, staying perfectly level at around 19,000 feet, and yet still maintaining a reasonably good airspeed.

Now that the emergency was apparently over and there was nothing else to do but stand waiting in this crush, Lalette felt her body take the delayed shocks of the past half hour. She was suddenly cold. She hunched herself over her folded arms, as though to conserve the dwindling heat of her body, pressing her legs against the metal sides of the cockpit to stop their shuddering.

Instinctively she pressed herself as far as possible into the dimly-lit, frighteningly-crowded flight deck until she stood close behind Bellamy's seat. His nearness gradually comforted her. If she put out a hand she could touch him. But because she knew she could, she no longer needed to.

She said to Bellamy: "Would it make a lot of difference if I went to the galley for coffee?"

"It would make some." He turned and smiled at her. "But I think it's worth it. So long as you're quick."

She was back soon, with the first tray. She reached her hand out for a cup for Sir James. "Two lumps for you, isn't it, sir?"

But he waved the cup away. "Workers first!" He nodded at the pilots.

Lalette put in one lump of sugar and passed it to Bellamy. "Your coffee, sir."

As he took it, for a moment his fingers pressed over hers. "Thanks," he said. "Just what we all needed."

The cockpit began to be filled with

Spot the Lawbreaker

Somewhere in this scene, the law is being broken. Can you see where? A barrister gives the answer on page 38

DRAWN BY RONALD LAMPITT

PLEASURE—2

You were made for enjoyment, and the world was filled with things which you will enjoy, unless you are too proud to be pleased by them.

John Ruskin

START A
non-stop
holiday
FOR
30/-

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INTERFLORA
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Why don't you use the Soap Doctors Choose?

IT is believed that more Doctors wash their hands and faces with Wright's Coal Tar Soap than with any other toilet soap.

Why?

They do it not with any idea that Wright's is a medicated soap but because they have found that Wright's Coal Tar Soap is the one toilet soap which keeps their hands and skin softer and more sensitive than any ordinary soap.

And, for that matter, completely germ-free.

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Wright's Coal Tar Soap is the kindest toilet soap of all. It is kind to your skin; kind to your complexion, kind to your children—and so refreshing to use.

WRIGHT'S
COAL TAR
TOILET SOAP
The Golden Tablet in Bath and Toilet sizes

conscientious human jollity, as Lalette went aft for the second tray of cups.

But after the coffee had gone, silence descended once more. There was an almost itching discomfort in so many people jam-packed together.

Bellamy rubbed the side of his head and the back of his neck. Then he straightened his shoulders as though throwing off the weight of the anxious souls behind him. For a second he spared a thought for the girls, hoping that neither of them would feel this suffocating claustrophobia and become hysterical.

He bent forward and looked at the instruments. Sir James leaned across him and asked: "Did we send an emergency signal, Captain?"

Bellamy shrugged his shoulders. "No point. State we were in, nobody could have helped us. And now"—he looked out at the steady wings stretched out under the orderly sky—"there's no need."

"How are we doing?"

"Not badly, sir. Considering everything, she's going very well." He put out his hand for a piece of paper on which Southwaite had written: *25 West. Course 078 degrees to 20 West. Estimate 06.10.*

Bellamy pursed his lips as he read it. They were going slower than he'd hoped. There were still another eight hundred miles of sea to go. . . .

It was like that, all bunched in the nose of the Emperor, that dawn discovered them two hours later. The door to the passenger cabin swung to and fro, disclosing the empty cabin beyond them. Finding that the Emperor stayed where she was without her yen to climb, they found also that the close proximity was even comfortable.

EASTLAKE pressed close to Sir James, and said wryly: "It's my boosters again. Jammed pistons on the elevators. And this time they haven't come unstuck."

But it was no time for recrimination, for allotting the blame. Sir James recalled the whole question of the Mark II booster cylinders—from London through New York to Bermuda—very vividly in his own mind.

Thoughtfully, he looked out of the port windscreen and watched the red line on the eastern horizon gradually disappear and a pearly-grey explosion of light take its place. The cabin, recently a small, black hole with the flickering dials of the instruments as the only illumination, became a strip of metal with too many people standing on it. Beards began to show; the deep lines of fatigue cut into the faces of all those around him. . . .

There was still cheerfulness. The aircraft seemed content to go on flying like this, without further trouble.

Looking at them, he was touched by the rather ragged scene before his eyes, everyone bunched behind the pilots, everyone contributing his weight to the eventual homecoming, while above them, glittering in the colours of a new day, the immense universe lay unbroken for millions of miles above their heads and below them washed the ocean as though they were poised on a scale between the disaster of going too high and the disaster of going too low by the odd counterbalance of the tight-packed weight of humanity on the flight deck.

Two hours from the estimated time of arrival over London, Bellamy obtained descent clearance, and by throttling back the engines still farther, managed to begin a very slow descent.

The sky had lightened. Down below them now they could see the slightly ruffled surface of the sea. Everyone immediately started to look at his watch, waiting for the moment when the coast of England would come out of the morning mist.

The time passed more slowly, now they were counting the minutes. Once or twice small, chunky clouds, low down, seemed to look like hills.

And then, suddenly, Seawood squeezed behind the right-hand seat, stretched out his hand and pointed out to starboard. "Land!"

A craggy piece of rock came jutting out of the horizon. It grew larger and longer—a cliff edged with green, with a beach in front of it and a chequer-board of fields and hills beyond. As they flew over the yellow stretch of sand that stretched like a winner's tape below them, everyone's spirits soared. The Emperor had at last come home.

And then, invisibly as a germ, a thought crossed their minds. Though the present danger had been overcome, and everyone was safe and comparatively comfortable, ahead lay the best-not-thought-about hazard of coming in for landing at London. . . .

The sun crept off the line of the horizon, bringing all the dark instruments on the flight deck out into the mundane light of day. Bellamy sat with his hand continually moving the wheel on the left-hand side of the throttle pedestal—testing the effect of the elevator trimmer on the attitude of the aircraft.

Cavendish asked: "Any luck with it yet, Andrew?"

"A little."

They were still managing to descend, with the engines throttled well back and half flap extended. And now there was a little more control. As Bellamy wound the trimming wheel back very slowly the nose dropped farther.

"I trust she will give us a trifle more co-operation in London."

"Should do, Charles. We're getting less tail heavy all the time." Every hour the engines were devouring two tons of fuel, and since the tanks were placed aft of the centre of gravity, as their contents disappeared weight was being subtracted from the side of the scales that was tipping the nose up.

"Only half an hour to go."

"Yes."

Again, Bellamy tried the trimming wheel, this time the whole length of its travel backwards.

"Went down more that time, Andrew," Cavendish said.

Bellamy grunted: "Getting better."

On the R/T, London Approach Control told Cavendish that the visibility was unlimited, the wind light and variable. He said: "Well, anyway, the weather's being co-operative for a change."

"Still going to be tricky."

"Yes." Cavendish paused, before going on in rather an offhand way: "I did a landing with the elevators jammed a couple of years ago. Rigger left the locks on."

"Then you're an old hand at this sort of thing?"

"Hardly an old hand. Once was enough. An experience I had hoped would not be repeated."

Bellamy looked across at the older pilot in the right-hand seat. The iron-grey moustache still bristled immaculately below the aristocratic nose. "Now it has been, you'd better do the landing at London."

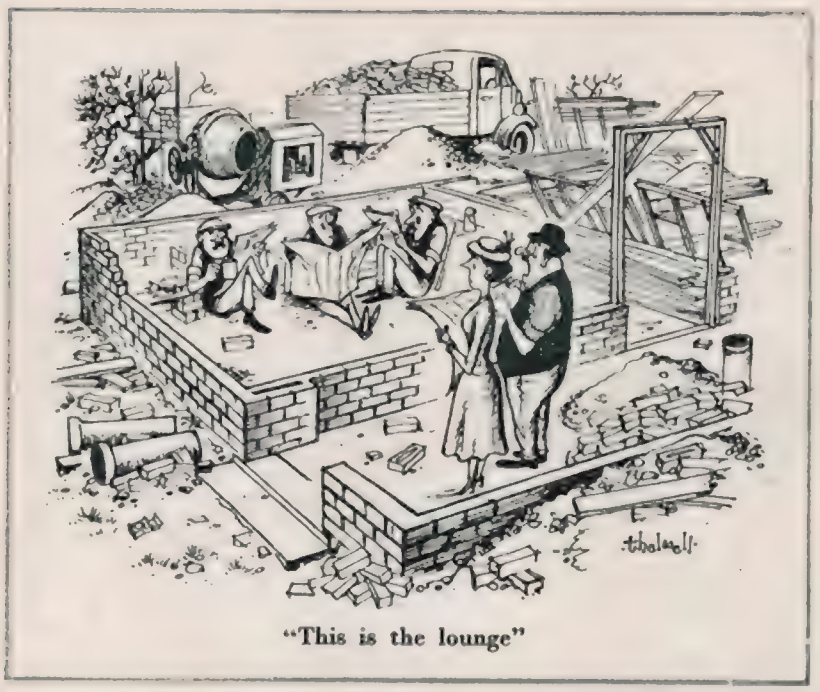
Cavendish said, quietly: "If you wish."

As the pilots changed seats, Rawlings's eyebrows shot up. Hooper, who

Spot the Lawbreaker

See page 36

THE motorist who has left his car blocking the entrance to a garage is guilty of obstruction, says a barrister-at-law. He is preventing the householder from getting his own car on to the road. Provided there is no obstruction to other road users, a motorist may park outside a private house. But he must not do so in front of a garage-way.



"This is the lounge"

had heard their conversation, started to be concerned with the safety straps round his seat and began to measure the distance to the nearest emergency exit, a red-painted, round porthole behind Southwaite's head. Knowing some of the difficulties involved, he felt the corners of his mouth go down; but he saw the two pilots exchange a glance of complete and friendly understanding, as Bellamy said briefly: "I'll tell Control we'll be doing a long final approach."

Gradually the shapes on the ground grew larger. The great loop of the Thames glittered to the north of the red rash of Reading. The Emperor was still descending at three hundred feet a minute.

"Can you see the field?" London asked them, when Bellamy reported over Woodley beacon.

"We can see the field."

There it was, the long, grey arms of the runways outstretched to welcome them home.

Then: "You're cleared final, cleared Number One. Runway two eight left."

Cavendish turned to the passengers and crew still crammed in the cockpit behind him. "This is where we'll be using *human* elevators. When I want to flatten out I'll be sending some of you back to the tail to get the nose up for me." Then he said crisply to Bellamy: "Gear down! Before landing check!"

Out of the corner of his eye Rawlings watched him fearfully. He couldn't help with the engines this time. But Cavendish seemed still to be preserving around himself his usual aura of authoritative calm. Only when at last he had lined himself up with the runway, as his hands lay limp on the useless elevator controls, did his eyes narrow as though they were continually measuring the four miles that still separated them from the runway.

The Emperor lumbered on down, her speed flickering around 120 knots. Once, after going too low, Cavendish suddenly whipped the trimming wheel fully forward. Then, as the nose slowly came up, he started to wind it off again.

But past the outer marker, again they were low. Cavendish shouted out: "Two to the back!" and Eastlake and Hamilton hurried to the tail.

Then it seemed to Rawlings they were getting far too high. The pilot was keeping in line with the runway, but the aircraft had slowed up her descent.

A mile before the threshold they still seemed a long way from the ground. Cavendish wound the trimmer fully back. Lazily the nose dropped—but the aircraft was now wallowing badly from side to side. Cavendish called back at Rawlings: "Eight thousand r.p.m.!"

Promptly, Rawlings reduced the power on the engines.

The end of the runway was coming up much more quickly. Cavendish was really committing himself this time.

"Another one to the back!"

Lalette went aft. Cavendish was flattening out his glide as best he could.

"Another two!"

The Emperor was flying almost level now, still a quarter of a mile from the threshold. Cavendish was winding ferociously on the trimming wheel. "Full flap!"

Just as the hydraulic pump whined out for the very last time, four more were sent to the tail. The pilot took the four levers on the pedestal. "My throttles, Mr. Rawlings!"

"Your throttles, sir!"

The engineer reluctantly took his hands off them. Out of his side window he could see that they were at least fifty feet up. Much too high. He thought: *He'll be cutting the motors in a minute. And then——*

But Cavendish did not move the throttles. Instead, he sent the last of his human weights, including Sir James Joliffe, to the back of the aircraft.

The nose came up higher. It seemed to Rawlings that they were sinking very slowly. He heard all the engine noise die down, and a second later the Emperor's huge tyres softly brushed against the hard surface of the runway.

In a voice filled with admiration and relief, mixed half and half, Rawlings said: "Bloody good landing, sir!"

The Emperor's brakes squeaked her wheels to a full stop, chocks came rattling over the ground, the steps banged against her side, the cabin door was flung wide open. Looking out, her little community saw a small knot of people waiting to welcome them. Without Sir James there to whip up public enthusiasm, the safe arrival had stirred far fewer hearts than the hazardous departure. And this, after all, wasn't Saturday afternoon, but lie-abed time on Sunday morning.

The chairman picked up his briefcase and walked so briskly down the steps that the others had difficulty keeping up with him. He seemed preoccupied, impatient with the recorded talk, with the film cameramen.

The minister advanced with his hand outstretched and the friendliest "My dear Joliffe" those thin lips had the capacity to enunciate. "You have had an excellent trip, I am sure."

Sir James stopped. He said tersely: "We had a number of teething troubles. Nothing fundamental. Subject to some minor modifications, I am perfectly satisfied."

The minister studied Sir James closely. He knew that the chairman was as well versed in the double talk of politics and economics as he was. He walked up with him to the Very Important Persons' Lounge, where drinks had been laid out thoughtfully by Air Endeavours' operations staff. Though there was champagne, the minister was not surprised to see Sir

overheard in the changing rooms

"You prefer zips, I see."

"Rather—they keep trousers in good shape and they fasten securely."

"Um, no embarrassing moments, eh?"

"Never . . . the SWIFT is a special SELF-LOCKING fly fastener and is absolutely reliable. Just look . . ."

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James take a whisky with very little water.

The crew came in with the rest of the passengers. "Why, Brocklehurst!" the minister said, as though surprised to see him back, and put his arm round him and drew him to one side.

And then, in a flood, the reporters swarmed round Sir James. When would the first passenger service leave? Was the reported huge success in America true? What about the record?

He waved his hand to quieten them. Immediately a hush came over the room. With a smile he said: "Aren't we rather jumping the gun?" And then he explained: "This is only the prototype Emperor, gentlemen. We had expected to make changes after the teething troubles had been discovered."

He said that Mr. Eastlake was going to incorporate an emergency system of manual controls—"for in an age of complications it is sometimes forgotten how rarely simple things go wrong."

And then? Well, to start with there would be a few months' freighting on the North Atlantic so that all teething troubles could be finally overcome.

There was an aghast silence among the aeronautical experts. To them it seemed a bitter bombshell. Freight . . . that was for old, worn-out aircraft, not new ones.

"But the delay, Sir James!" they said. "The Americans might establish the fast passenger non-stop service before us."

"And what if they do?" was his answer. "Jolly good luck to them!"

There was whispering among the journalists. Then they asked: "What is your opinion of the aircraft's performance, sir, now the proving flight is over?"

Sir James said: "Better ask the pilots. They're the people who really know the answer to that one."

Bellamy said: "This flight has proved everything we wanted to find out. She's fast. She handles well. Take-off and climb are phenomenal. Above all, she's strong."

And Cavendish added authoritatively: "We have complete confidence in her. Subject to the modifications

"It's Mr. Smith, dear. He says would you like him to turn his hose on our garden now and again while we are away, and if so may he have it back now?"

Sir James has outlined, she has been proved an excellent aircraft."

The reporters wrote it all down. Several went to the telephones. A feeling of spontaneous gaiety took over the party. Everyone seemed to be talking and laughing at the same time. Glasses clinked.

Just before the party broke up, Sir James raised his hands for silence and said rather diffidently: "I would like to thank everyone who came down here this morning to meet us. And now, if you don't mind, before I go I want to have a few words with the passengers and crew who were with me on our flight."

Good humouredly the crowd finished their drinks and started to move towards the door of the V.I.P. lounge. The minister laid his beefy hand on Sir James's shoulder and whispered: "Splendid show!" The station manager bowed, but the chairman did not see him. He was looking out of the window to where two tractors tugged forward the silver bulk of the Emperor, baptized now in North Atlantic air.

Sir James, lost in thought, watched the aircraft disappear round the corner of the taxiway on her way to the hangar. Then, conscious of the silence in the V.I.P. lounge, he turned and found he was alone once more with the other inhabitants of Alfa Delta. They looked towards him expectantly. Bellamy thought to himself, not unkindly, feeling that in the great man's position it was the only thing he could do: here comes the lecture on taking a sensible attitude: no need to talk of the alarms and excursions of the last flight, lest people outside the company got the wrong idea.

Sir James cleared his throat. "I just wanted to say," he said, "how much I appreciate you all being behind me these last few days. Nobody, I feel, could have had more co-operation than I have had. In the end," he smiled, remembering the scene of only a couple of hours ago, "we were all needed to bring the Emperor back home."

A shadow momentarily crossed his face as he assumed the responsibility for everything that was indeed his rightful privilege. Rather apologetically he said: "Rather a dance I've led you!"

And Chief Steward Hamilton, answering for everyone there, interpreting accurately the thoughts that were now passing through their minds, immediately flashed back: "Never mind, Sir James! We are ready to do it again."

There was a murmur of assent. A splendid feeling that the aircraft was better, not worse, for all the strains and stresses of the flight. That in this most severe of tests she had indeed proved herself, filled every male mind.

The dregs of the remaining bottles managed to top up the glasses. The Emperor had really arrived.

Lalette looked around. Somewhere deep inside her, like a powerful, dammed-up spring of joy, not to be touched or opened in the noise and the hubbub and the presence of so many others, was the quiet certain knowledge of her own homecoming.

Very quietly, Andrew Bellamy's hand moved across the table they leaned against. Very slowly hers, too, half-closed the distance between them.

And, once they had found each other there they stayed, while the Emperor began her inspection in the hangar; while the chairman was bowed into his car; while the experts planned; while the publicity men explained. And while the tumult died away.

THE END

David Beaty's new novel "The Proving Flight" is published by Secker and Warburg at 14s.

Wizards at War

Continued from page 23

transformed into blazing wrecks by the starshells.

Although the development of radar had limited the starshell's scope, over a million of Richardson's shells were used in the next two years, and with this experience behind them the Wheezers and Dodgers went on to tackle a number of similar tasks. The most important, perhaps, and certainly the most eventful of these projects was the Water Snowflake.

Aircraft searching the night seas for U-boats found that they needed a special type of flare which could be dropped into the water when they detected a U-boat, and to meet this need the department designed a novel apparatus.

In a buoyant container was a rocket, a parachute and a Snowflake flare. When this was dropped into the sea the aircraft had time to fly in a circle in the darkness until the U-boat lay between the dormant Snowflake and the plane.

The rocket was then ignited by a cell operated by the action of the sea water and the floating object suddenly came to life, the parachute flare being hurled a thousand feet into the air, where it burned for a minute, silhouetting the submarine for the attack.

To test the Water Snowflake's behaviour afloat, the department was lent an R.A.F. high-speed launch, and off Ramsgate they began preliminary trials, dropping the apparatus into the sea astern, attached to a line which was paid out while the boat moved slowly ahead. An officer explained to the coxswain that the rocket was expected to fire after thirty seconds in the water, but the first Snowflake went off too close to the launch for the coxswain's liking. When the next was lowered into the water he opened the throttle and went full ahead, completely forgetting that the proximity of the Snowflake to his launch depended entirely on the speed at which the line could be paid out. In a few seconds he was towing the Snowflake container horizontally, with the rocket pointing straight at the helpless observers on board.

Everyone lay flat on the open deck and waited for the explosion. The range was point blank; it was a miracle that the rocket missed the launch. For the rest of the day the coxswain treated the Water Snowflakes with the deepest respect.

Although the department's chief preoccupation lay with the war at sea, several interesting projects unconnected with naval warfare were now being developed by Goodeve's team. Among these was an apparatus known as Hajile.

For security purposes every project launched by the Wheezers and Dodgers was given a code name. Some of the code names they chose for their more unorthodox ventures must have puzzled the Intelligence experts who had to vet them as much as any enemy agent. Hajile was one of these names.

The project started when the army asked for a way to drop heavy objects —vehicles, guns and stores—from the air. The soldiers stressed that a high speed of fall was essential; lessening the danger of drift, it allowed the load to be dropped more accurately, and it also cut down the risk of damage from ground fire.

Eventually the department hit on the idea of using the blast of a nest of rockets to cushion the impact of the loaded platform on the ground. The object to be dropped was fitted into a sort of harness, girdled by a huge "candelabra" of rockets. The platform would fall free through the air until it was a few feet off the ground. At this moment all the rockets would fire at once, decelerating the speed of the platform so powerfully that, in theory at least, it would touch down quite gently.

To the observers of its trials it was a highly spectacular affair. In the last crucial seconds of its flight to earth the whole apparatus was enshrouded in a pillar of smoke and flame, and a senior officer instantly suggested its code name from the Second Book of Kings.

"Look at it!" he remarked as he watched one of the earliest trials. "It's Elijah in reverse."

The first aim of Duncan Bruce and "Paul" Roberson—the officers who were given the task of developing Hajile—was to devise a means of setting off the rockets at the right height above the ground. The obvious answer seemed to be some form of plummet which would dangle below the apparatus and fire the rockets as soon as it hit the earth.

PLEASURE—3

The great pleasure in life is doing what people say you cannot do.

Walter Bagehot

To experiment with this unusual type of switch-gear they had to find a place where they could rig up wires and slide the plummet down them. Someone suggested the great hangar at Cardington, the R.A.F. depot in Bedfordshire, and there Roberson spent most of November, 1942, clambering precariously about on the cat-walk high in the roof, and sliding plummets of different shapes, weights, and sizes down a long wire. A naval stoker was detailed to assist him, but he proved unable to face heights, and Roberson had to rescue him from his very first climbing attempt, when he became paralysed with fright half-way up an eighty-foot fire escape.

The initial tests completed, the Wheezers and Dodgers aimed for a higher velocity—which meant a greater vertical drop. They loaded all the gear into a truck and drove to Birnbeck.

When Hajile had been adapted to fire over water they began full scale trials, dropping the contraption, loaded with a large block of concrete, into the sea from a Lancaster bomber. On his early runs the pilot deposited it too far from the end of the pier for Louis Klemantaski—the department's photographer—to film the descent, so he was asked to aim as close to Birnbeck as possible. This request proved ill advised, for the pilot was now on his mettle. Taking off again he made a couple of dummy runs, and then released the huge concrete block and its girdle of rockets from two thousand feet with alarming accuracy.

It came screaming through the air, and the watchers on the pier suddenly realized that it was going to score a direct hit. Everyone started running desperately down the long plank roadway. The concrete "bomb" landed squarely on the roof of the department's engineering shop. It sheared through a massive steel joist, and then demolished the covered way leading to the steamer jetty. Happily there were no casualties, though the Wren cooks preparing lunch a few feet from the wrecked shelter thought the end of the world had come.

After that the trials proceeded uneventfully. At first, with four rockets fitted round the concrete slab, the load hit the sea fairly heavily. They tried with eight rockets, and Hajile fulfilled all expectations. Hurtling towards the water the slab was checked just above the waves, and then it slid gently below the surface.

These tests over the sea showed that there was nothing wrong with the general theory, but the gear now had

to be adapted for land trials. By March, 1943, the Hajile team had perfected the switch unit, and they offered to demonstrate this to Richardson from a tree in Hyde Park. For security purposes they took the gear to an enclosed anti-aircraft site, and Winston Churchill's daughter Mary, serving there as an A.T.S. officer, was greatly surprised to find Roberson, in his naval uniform, wrestling with a tangled mass of wire in the topmost branches of a tall elm.

When the plummet passed its test successfully the department had to find some practical task for Hajile to carry out. A successful practical demonstration of what Hajile could do would hasten its progress. As a start it seemed a good idea to drop a jeep from an aircraft. But jeeps were hard to procure—especially by people who wanted to throw them out of aeroplanes at 2,000 feet—and Roberson had little success until he called on the American Navy in Grosvenor Square.

He explained rather nervously why he wanted two jeeps, but he had hardly finished speaking when the American grabbed the telephone. "Say, Jake," he said urgently, "come on up. There's a guy here who wants two jeeps—and, boy, he's going to beat the living daylights out of them!"

HAJILE'S first jeep trial was an unsuccessful affair, held on a bitterly cold winter's day. First the aircraft refused to start. Then snow fell heavily, damping the rocket fuses, and when they dropped the jeep the Hajile equipment failed to function at all. Falling at forty feet per second on the small pilot parachute alone, jeep number one went straight into the ground with a shattering crash. A fortnight later they tried again, adding many more rockets. This time the jeep survived the drop relatively undamaged, but when the smoke cleared away they found that the vehicle was upside down.

Hajile, in fact, was in a thoroughly obstinate mood, and the thrust of the rockets varied in such an unpredictable way that the Wheezers and Dodgers never knew what to expect. Only one rocket had to fail for the whole decelerating aparatus to be thrown out of gear, and sometimes when the plummet struck the ground the whole cargo would be hurled violently skywards, falling back with a tremendous, earth-shaking crump which tore all the fittings apart. Close to the ground the gear was surrounded by so much smoke and flame that it was difficult to ascertain precisely what happened at the moment of firing.

After one sequence of fairly successful drops a demonstration was staged for representatives of all three Services on Newbury Downs, using large blocks of concrete again, for by this time jeeps were becoming a rather expensive item. It was a lovely, still summer day, but the rockets were on their very worst behaviour. When Hajile was launched from the aircraft some of the rockets failed to fire at all, and others which did set light to the pilot parachutes. The concrete block subsequently hit the ground with terrific force and buried itself—as Bruce succinctly remarked afterwards—"right up to the maker's name."

Much discouraged, the Hajile team realized that they would have to start almost from the beginning again, carrying out exhaustive tests with both the plummet and the rockets. Richardson decided to transfer the trials to Shoeburyness, and try suspending the whole apparatus from a giant crane. But by the time all Hajile's teething troubles had been cured there was no chance to test the apparatus in action. It was, in fact, D-Day when the last memorable incident in its long development story occurred.

Before trials began on that historic morning the department team stood beneath the crane discussing the news which had filtered through about the invasion. Hajile lay on the ground alongside them, the framework of iron girders which normally held the concrete block resting on a raised platform of railway sleepers.

Not realizing that the switches were

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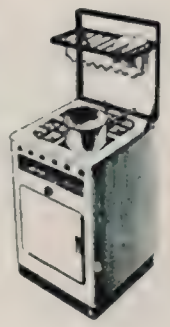

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OUR staircase had panelled banisters which made the hall rather dark. My husband found that he could easily remove the panelling by prising away the beading with which it was fixed, and replaced the wood with sheets of "bubble pattern" glass. He used the panelling as a template for the glass, drawing round the wood on large sheets of paper and supplying the glass merchant with the pattern. The glass was set in putty, and the beading replaced.

closed, an electrician making some routine test of his own connected up the firing circuit. To his astonishment all the rockets fired at once, and the great mass of ironwork rose straight into the air.

One officer was felled by a crack on the jaw. Roberson, who was actually standing in the middle of the circle of rockets, had a miraculous escape, for he was completely engulfed in flames as the contraption took off.

Forty feet above the ground Hajile lurched sideways. It crashed back to earth almost on top of Klemantaski, who was staggering about, blinded by a blast of sand which had caught him full in the face. He did not recover his sight for several days.

FOR the most part the Wheezers and Dodgers were split up into teams to tackle well-defined projects. But Donald Currie, an artist in civilian life, immersed himself in a field of experiments entirely his own. He was the department's camouflage expert.

One of his most difficult jobs was to design camouflage for a secret raiding craft. He was told it would carry a small crew and a load of explosive, and when its occupants paddled ashore in canoes for reconnaissance or sabotage work the parent craft would sink to the sea-bed. Several days later an automatic device brought the submerged boat back to the surface, ready to receive the raiding party when they paddled back.

Currie's job was to devise a colour plan which would make the boat invisible to an aircraft while it lay on the bottom and to camouflage the canoes. The assignment meant hours of playing with toy boats at the Vale Farm swimming baths at Wembley—to the astonishment of the attendant, who thought Currie was too old for that kind of thing—and many chilly nights paddling round Staines reservoir.

Only one essay in camouflage developed into a combined operation involving a whole team of the Wheezers and Dodgers, and oddly enough Donald Currie—busy with other work at the time—took relatively little part in it.

At full moon, rivers and lakes can be seen from afar. R.A.F. crews bombing Kiel spoke of sighting the Elbe fifty miles away, and Currie, making an aerial reconnaissance himself on a night when haze had already cut down visibility, picked out the Mersey quite easily at a distance of thirty-five miles. It was the heavy raids on Merseyside which first focused attention on the need for water camouflage, for the German bombers attacking the docks at Liverpool were seen to check their final approach by a line of five reservoirs leading from the Trent Valley.

When the proposal first came to Goodeve, a professor had already conducted some interesting experiments at Cambridge, where he had camouflaged a stream with coal dust. Goodeve foresaw greater difficulty in applying such a method to any tidal waterway, and for stretches of static water other types of camouflage were available. Nets, supported by cork floats, could be spread over the water, and if properly moored they would not be so vulnerable to the wind. Within certain limits, however, the coal-dust experiments had certainly proved promising, and the department could not reject the idea without giving it a fair trial.

A team, soon to be known as the Kentucky Minstrels, was therefore formed under the leadership of Duncan Bruce to study the whole project and work began on the Thames in a craft that was inappropriately named H.M.S. Persil.

From the start there was keen competition, for rivals were in the field. On Ruislip Reservoir a party from the Fuel Research Station at Greenwich was already testing an apparatus rather like a vacuum cleaner (except that it worked in reverse). Towed behind a launch, this discharged large quantities of oiled coal dust just beneath the surface.

Bruce tackled the problem from a slightly different angle. After discussions with a fuel consultant, he first fed the dust into a high-pressure water jet and then expelled the mixture through an ordinary fire-fighting appliance. In this way he could lay his inky screen ahead of the boat and the method of discharge was faster and cleaner—though cleanliness was only a comparative term for any part of the Kentucky Minstrels' activities.

TRIALS began in quite a modest way, but later a petty officer and a party of ratings were drafted to speed the experiments on the Thames. The competing sprayers were installed in four large launches, which plied up and down the river at night, smothering its murky waters in a thick mantle of coal dust or soot, and more than once Winston Churchill himself came out on to Westminster Bridge to inspect the results.

The experiments became extremely unpopular with Thames-side housewives, who wrote to their M.P.s complaining that their laundry was being ruined. But nobody suffered more than the Wheezers and Dodgers themselves. The coal dust settled on them in clouds, ruining their uniforms and covering them with a sooty grime which soap and water took long to dispel.

After a while they scarcely noticed each other's appearance, and an officer, returning to the office one morning after a whole night on the river, was quite surprised when he was stopped in Piccadilly by an immaculate young commander R.N. who regarded him with extreme distaste.

"All you R.N.V.R.s are the same," he said scathingly. . . . "Look at you . . . absolutely filthy . . . a disgrace to the Service! And you didn't even salute me . . . why not?"

As it happened, the officer in question was accompanied by Denys Richardson, who had been promoted to commander two days earlier, so he said, somewhat smugly: "As this officer with me holds the same rank as yourself I did not think it was necessary."

Richardson was wearing a naval raincoat over his badges of rank, and the R.N. officer retreated in confusion.

As the trials on the Thames progressed it became evident that the effort involved in blacking out large stretches of tidal water would far outweigh any possible tactical advantage. To cover one acre demanded at least a hundredweight of specially prepared coal dust, and as fast as they supplemented the initial discharge a strong tide would wash the dust away. If a wind was blowing, the whole film piled up against the lee shore.

In the greater shelter of the Surrey Commercial Docks results were more encouraging, but the Wheezers and Dodgers had their greatest success at Coventry. H.M.S. Persil, which after the early experiments on the Thames had been used mainly for retrieving the dead cats and dogs which floated round the dock area, was transported north for these trials, and with no tide to hamper their experiments, Bruce and his team camouflaged Coventry Canal. They did the job so effectively that an old gentleman and a dog walked into it, under the impression that it was a newly made up road.

By that time, however, it was realized that any success by the Kentucky Minstrels could have relatively little effect on the Luftwaffe. The enemy had switched to moonless nights for their mass raiding, and with the swift development of radar the most ardent advocates of water camouflage abandoned their faith in this expensive and somewhat unreliable protection.

Meanwhile the Wheezers and Dodgers were facing up to their greatest challenge. They were working on secret weapons for the invasion of Europe.

NEXT WEEK: An unhappy genius makes lorries run across water

Out of the city of fear

Continued from page 15.

I had more time I could do it alone, but there are only eleven weeks to go before you return. I've *got* to give some reason for the rush. Programmes and so forth are made out months beforehand."

"But he doesn't have to go through with a concert or recording," I protested. "It's only a blind."

He shook his head. "No, he'll have to do whatever he's invited to do; otherwise the Communist governments will level the accusation that people are being smuggled out from behind the Curtain and international relations would be in the soup."

I wanted to say to hell with international relations, but I saw his point and told him to do whatever he thought best.

Peter saw me to my bus stop and we parted. I hated to see him go. He was the kindest and most humane person that I had ever met. . . .

Making my way towards Broadcasting House I wondered why the Polish military attaché had asked me to lunch with him and why he had insisted on meeting outside the B.B.C. and not at the embassy.

I could see him now, standing a little to the right of the steps fronting the entrance, a small man with shoulders hunched high into a grimy raincoat. As I made to cross the road a stream of cars blocked him from view. When I reached the steps he had gone. I blinked. These disappearing acts just weren't funny.

I stood there for five minutes or so wondering what to do, when suddenly I saw him approaching me from the direction of Regent Street, where I myself had stood a few minutes before. He must have seen me crossing the road as I saw him now. Why then had he taken this march around the block?

We shook hands in the best party tradition and I noticed that his eyes were fixed not on me but on a point over my shoulder. I swung round, only to meet the grey-white walls of the

PLEASURE—4

Pleasure is very seldom found where it is sought.

Samuel Johnson

B.B.C. There was no one there. I realized then that he had been checking on me to see whether I had tipped off someone at the embassy about our meeting or to see whether we were being observed.

He had asked me to this lunch in a carefree mood after the *zebranie* at the embassy. Now suspicion had returned. My acceptance of his invitation had probably made him think that I was acting under instructions from security to gauge his reaction to the West, while I was not at all sure myself that he had not staged this little cloak-and-dagger drama to get me to believe just that and so make me lower my own guard. In this atmosphere of mutual confidence we set out for lunch.

I thought I might as well have a little fun while the going was good, so I suggested that we had some coffee before lunch and took him to a West End coffee bar where I knew that he would feel most uncomfortable. It was just twelve o'clock and, as I had expected, the place was full of horribly sleek young men and girls with horsetail hair-dos. The woman behind the coffee bar was French and her negligible knowledge of the English language was about on a level with that of the military attaché. I refused to intervene while they fought it out—I paid by a long wait for the coffee.

After lunch we parted and I suddenly realized that I was tired. Going into Brompton Oratory, I sat for some time in the shade. I looked at the high altar and suddenly was on my knees. Like most people who have forgotten God, I asked for a miracle. A sort

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A LEVER PRODUCT

of spiritual blackmail—you do this and I'll do that. *Dear God,* I prayed, *please get Andrzej out and I'll do anything in return.*

The weeks went past with a tormenting slowness. At the end of May I saw Peter again, and he assured me that the stage was all set for the invitation to go through. It would probably come from Paris.

I could hardly bear the suspense. I had to find something to do. When I saw a card in an Oxford Street store, advertising for part-time salesmen, I hinted to the ambassador that I was thinking of getting a job. He was furious. I think that he thought that I was playing with the idea of defecting, and that if I did anything wrong he would be held responsible. He was so frightened that he made the incredibly crude statement that should I do anything without permission he would have me deported in chains.

Then came another setback. Peter told me that the invitation, although it was ready, could not possibly be sent before July 1, or even a little later.

What was I to do? How could I prolong my passport without arousing suspicion? I thought of a car accident. The embassy could not order me off to Warsaw if I were lying mummified in bandages. But it could send a doctor to examine me. To have to return at a moment when Andrzej might be allowed out, all for the lack of a few days' extra grace, would be unbearable.

An incident at the embassy added to my worry and made me fear that I was suspected. Michal Zulkos, the first counsellor, a man I knew it would be dangerous to cross, returned from a holiday in Warsaw. Andrzej wrote to say that he had given Zulkos a rose for me. But I heard nothing; Zulkos did not even phone to say that he had met my husband.

Then one day, Zulkos handed me the rose with an apology for keeping it so long. But he didn't say *why* he had kept it. He caught me off my guard with a question about whom I had been seeing. I tried to be noncommittal and said friends, lots of friends.

He nodded and our eyes met. Terrified, I tried not to lower mine first. I was quite sure that he knew something. I wondered whether he had told anyone else.

I put the withered rose deep into my handbag and tried to conceal my shaking hands as we said goodbye. Smiling with his mouth but not with his eyes, Zulkos said, suddenly: "There's a lot of temptation in the West, but it's much wiser not to be tempted."

What did he mean by that? I scuttled out of the embassy and into Yarner's, a coffee house in Langham Place. I sat there miserable, uncertain which way to turn. I walked down Regent Street. The trousers of a man walking behind me caught my attention reflected in the shop windows. They were wide and shapeless, of a kind not usually worn in England. . . .

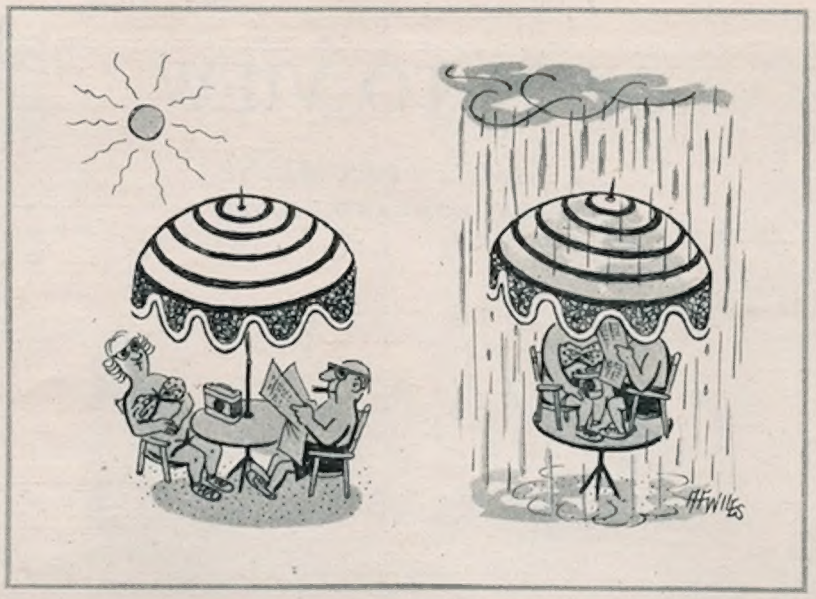
Seventeen days before I was due to return to Poland, there came a ray of light in the gloom. The ambassador told me that he wanted me to say a few words to the foreign diplomats invited to the embassy reception on July 22, National Liberation Day. My passport would be prolonged for a few days.

I agreed immediately. Of course the speech would be drafted for me and my job would only be to read it.

Zulkos must have kept his suspicions to himself. Perhaps he was only working on a hunch; but the fact that one of his men was trailing me proved that it was a serious hunch. Had somebody talked? Why hadn't he told the ambassador? Or perhaps he had? Then why the invitation to make a public speech? There was nothing I could do but await developments.

On July 7 I had a letter from Andrzej. He wrote that he intended to buy a St. Bernard puppy in the first half of July. A puppy meant a journey West. What journey and where to? Peter had phoned the day before to tell me that his invitation would soon be sent. But it could not have arrived already.

I was still being shadowed, so I could not go to see Peter. I phoned him and persuaded him to keep back *his* invitation for a few days. If Andrzej had something in mind that we knew nothing about, it might upset his plans to receive it.



On July 10 my telephone rang. When I heard the voice I lost all power to speak. It was Andrzej. At first I thought he was calling from Warsaw; then the word Zürich penetrated my stupid brain and I went quite numb. Zürich was in Switzerland. How could he be calling from there?

He kept asking: "Are you there? Are you there?" The urgency in his voice brought me round and, painfully tense, I tried to make sense of what he was saying.

"Listen carefully," he said, speaking very quickly. "Go to the embassy tomorrow and behave as if nothing has happened. Don't forget: you know nothing at all about where I am. If they tell you I am in Switzerland, pretend the news is a big surprise. I can't stop to explain what's happened; I'm being followed. But I've phoned Etienne—you remember me speaking of Etienne—he'll ring you tonight from Geneva to tell you everything."

With a catch in his voice Andrzej said goodbye. I stood there holding the receiver and wondering whether the strain of the last few months had finally affected my brain. I could only wait for Etienne to get in touch with me and reassure me on my sanity. He was an old and trusted friend of Andrzej's who had lived in Geneva for many years.

I looked at myself in the mirror. Apart from the fact that it was drained of all colour, my face looked the same. In the hall I bumped into the woman I was staying with, whom the Polish Embassy thought was my aunt. She cried out and asked me where I had seen a ghost.

Mumbling incoherently, I sat down on the stairs and burst into tears. Andrzej was out. He was in the West and free. Miracles could still happen.

Etienne phoned at half past three. He was now in Zürich. He had left Geneva after Andrzej's phone call to be closer to him, should he need help. The story began to make sense as he pieced it together. Later Andrzej was to fill in the details for me.

It all started with a telegram from the Swiss Radio in Zürich asking Andrzej to make some recordings of his own works and of some Polish contemporary music. By a happy fluke the telegram was addressed to the Composers' Association in Warsaw, of which Andrzej was vice-president, and it thus fell into his hands. Had it been sent to the Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries Committee—the usual procedure—it is doubtful whether he would ever have heard of it.

As it was, he went to Mirabel, the chief of the Western Department of the Cultural Relations Committee, and showed her the telegram, and asked what sort of reply he was to send. In accordance with the iron rule, it was impossible for Andrzej to reply off his own bat. Mirabel stalled and said she would get in touch with the Polish Minister in Switzerland, who would check the authenticity of the invitation. In other words, the secret police would get moving to find out what the whole affair was about. Andrzej returned home and waited; his future life was in the balance.

A few days passed and the Swiss Radio, impatient for a reply, sent another telegram. Again Andrzej went to the Cultural Relations Committee and this time he put on a tough act.

"We must send the Swiss some sort of reply," he said angrily. It wouldn't do to offend them. The party was in a spot. The Swiss weren't the Americans to be insulted at every turn, but a small neutral people with whom the party liked to flirt.

Mirabel said that the matter was still being settled and that she would send a telegram on Andrzej's behalf without delay. She refused to say what the telegram would contain.

Summoning all his self-control, Andrzej told the biggest lie of his life and explained that, although he had no great wish to go to Switzerland, a concert of contemporary Polish music was well worth while from the propaganda point of view. "I am very busy," he said. "Perhaps someone else can go."

I shut my eyes for a moment, and cut off Etienne's voice. I could guess at the enormous effort it had cost Andrzej to make that remark.

PLEASURE—5

There are only three pleasures in life pure and lasting, and all are derived from inanimate things—books, pictures and the face of Nature.

William Hazlitt

Andrzej knew that if he were to show the slightest eagerness he would lose all hope of being sent. Once more he returned home to wait in the large and luxurious flat on Nowy Swiat Street into which he had moved during my absence and which I had never seen. On the hall-table lay an important-looking letter. He tore it open. It was a State document informing Andrzej that he had been awarded a high order to mark the tenth anniversary of the People's Poland.

Some days later he was summoned to the offices of the Cultural Relations Committee. This was it: but whatever the decision he dared show no sign of feeling.

He walked into Mirabel's room. Mirabel stood up to greet him. "You are going to Zürich," she said. "Everything is ready for your journey."

Andrzej murmured an acknowledgment, but as he spoke he sensed a certain tension in Mirabel's manner. The woman suspected something, he could tell that.

Mirabel gave him a passport and Swiss visa. Inside was a small envelope. It had come from the Swiss Legation.

Now Andrzej understood the tension. If the message was compromising, he was ruined.

There was a cold silence. Sick with fright, Andrzej fought for nonchalance as he ripped the envelope open.

He read the card and put it into the chief's outstretched hand. It was a message from the Swiss Minister with his compliments and good wishes for a successful trip.

Leaving the committee offices, Andrzej walked through Warsaw saying goodbye to the beloved ruins and the streets of broken dreams. In the evening he drove to the family vault in Powazki Cemetery. The fresh imprint of the Irish name of our small daughter on the old grey stone filled him with desolation and, making his peace with his family in haste, he returned to the flat.

There he packed a small bag which would do for a few days. He laid his medals and decorations on the open desk. They would be the first thing to be seen by the secret police when they entered the flat, after they realized he wasn't coming back.

He closed the grand Blüthner piano for the last time. Everything would have to be left behind. But he had no regrets.

He flew to Zürich on July 9. He was met by the Music Director of the Zürich Radio and a representative of the Polish Legation in Berne. In the lounge of the hotel which the legation had picked for him, he immediately spotted an agent watching him and decided against making any phone calls through the hotel switchboard.

The next day, closely shadowed, he went to the railway station and ordered lunch in the large restaurant. The agent sat a few tables away. Suddenly, before his order came through, he left the restaurant, out into the cloakroom and out the back way and then down a side street. There he caught a taxi to the post office, from which he phoned Etienne and myself.

Etienne said that Andrzej would be busy recording until Tuesday—it was now Friday. After the last recording session on Tuesday afternoon he would return to the hotel and stay in his room until it was dark. Then, if all was clear he would use the back stairs leading to a side entrance where Etienne would be waiting in his car to drive him to somewhere outside Zürich.

If everything went according to plan and Andrzej managed to get his visa from the British Consul, then they would return to the Zürich airport in time for Andrzej to board the night plane for London.

But there were snags. Andrzej was being shadowed, and the hotel was under observation. At the moment there were two men standing guard on the street corner. Had they thought of the back entrance?

Etienne told me that he didn't know how Andrzej would manage to get through the recording sessions. He was in a state of complete mental and physical exhaustion. It was vital above all else that the Polish Embassy in London should suspect nothing. It was up to me to see that they did not.

I promised to sound the embassy and relay anything suspicious to Zürich. We rang off. For a long time I sat by the phone, thinking of Andrzej and of how even now he could be snatched back into the Communist world.

When I got near Portland Place I felt sick with fear, and had to go into Yarner's for black coffee. I was afraid that somebody would suspect a plot and keep me in the embassy as a hostage. It would be a good way of making Andrzej return to Warsaw.

On the other hand, if the Poles were still unaware of our plans, then my absence at this vital moment might start them thinking along the right track. It was a chance I dare not take.

I wondered what my legal position would be. If I were kept in the embassy until Andrzej was safely back behind the Curtain, nobody could do anything about it. For on being released I would deny that I had been held against my will, simply to ensure

Andrzej's safety in Poland. And he, if he were accused, would deny any wish to defect in order to get me safely out of the embassy.

He might, of course, call the press and create a rumpus, but he would be too chary of taking any chances with my safety to risk that. The whole trouble with us, I reflected, was that we were pulverized with fright. We had walked for too long in the shadow of the party and of the secret police and our own fear would not let us think straight.

Suddenly I knew what to do. Going into a phone booth opposite Yarner's, I rang a friend and asked him to meet me without delay in his car. I could not rope Peter in on this. He had his official position to consider and it would never do for him to become implicated in a possible international row.

Getting into my friend's car, I hoped that the man shadowing me was having his day off. I told my friend to make a detour round Regent Street. As he drove along, I explained what I wanted him to do.

I was going into the embassy. If I didn't come out within two hours, he was to phone Etienne in Switzerland and tell him to get in touch at once with Andrzej, who would probably be rehearsing at the Swiss Radio building. Under no circumstances was Etienne to allow Andrzej to go back to his hotel. The best thing would be for them both to get to Geneva and go into hiding without delay.

This done, my friend was to tell the nearest policeman that a former British subject was being held against her will in the Polish Embassy. But he was to do this *only* after he had Etienne's assurance that he was able to warn Andrzej. Not for one moment was Etienne to leave Andrzej's side.

It was the best plan I could think of. My friend, a Pole, and like all Poles used to conspiracy, nodded his head. I knew that I could rely on him to do exactly as I said. I also knew that I was breaking his heart. He was a journalist and scented a story. We drove slowly past the B.B.C. and he parked the car a few yards past Weymouth Street.

I managed to ring the embassy bell without too much hesitation. Inside I paid my respects to the hall-porter.

Helena Stroczan came through the hall. She greeted me effusively and I began to relax. The porter put down the phone and said that both the ambassador and Comrade Zulkos were out. But they had left a message that they wanted to see me. Could I come back in an hour?

I thought for a moment. The fact that I had made an appearance at the embassy proved that I had nothing to hide. I said that I wasn't feeling too well and was going home to bed. If it was anything urgent they could give me a ring. Otherwise I would come in on Thursday.

The porter promised to pass on the message. I didn't tell him that I banked on meeting Andrzej at London Airport very early on Wednesday morning.

As I reached the door someone called me back: "Just a moment, Comrade Panufnik." It was the man I had always thought of as the Backroom Boy.

Forcing down the hysteria that was rising within me, I made myself turn round. Clutching hard at the handle of my handbag so that he couldn't see my shaking hands, I said, "Yes, Comrade?"

We looked at each other. I saw that the porter had pressed his button and the door had swung to again. I walked back to the middle of the hall and sat down at the table. At least the Backroom Boy wouldn't have the satisfaction of seeing me collapse on the floor.

I waited. Then he began to discuss my speech for July 22, and fear gave way to hatred. I agreed to everything he had to say. Then I added a few points of my own, so overwhelmingly enthusiastic that for a moment he looked put out that anyone could be even more pro-Soviet than himself. But, I thought, I won't be there to say it all and you are in for the biggest shock of your life when you learn why.

It was a thought that sent warmth right through me. We parted on the best of terms. My journalist friend had almost bitten off his fingers waiting.

For two days I heard nothing. Then on the evening of Tuesday, July 13, there came frantic phone calls from the embassy. My "aunt" wisely said that I had gone away.

I waited in agony. This evening was to make or break our chance of happiness. If everything had gone well, Andrzej was waiting to catch the plane to London. Were these phone calls a sign that our plan was working—or did they mean that it had failed, that the Communists had their hands on Andrzej and were out to get hold of me too?

July 13 was our wedding anniversary. At four next morning my telephone rang again. Was this the end of all that I hoped for?

I have always hated the sound of a phone shrilling in the night; it can so often bring news of tragedy. But this sound was worse than anything I had heard before. Was it the embassy? Should I ask my "aunt" to reply? Were men coming from the embassy to talk to me?

I lifted the receiver, and my ordeal was over. It was Etienne, with the news that Andrzej was in a plane on its way to Britain.

Later I heard how the whole episode might have ended in tragedy.

After finishing his last recording session, Andrzej returned to the hotel, where he was joined by Etienne, who had taken a room on the floor below. Suddenly his phone rang. It was the Polish Minister in Berne. He wanted to know why Andrzej had neglected to make a plane reservation for his return journey to Warsaw.

Andrzej answered very carefully. He said that he had been busy recording and was very tired but would ring the airport at once. "Do that," said the minister. "Then ring me again."

Andrzej made his booking, then telephoned Berne as instructed. He heard the minister begin to speak. Then, suddenly, the voice broke off. Andrzej was thoroughly alarmed. He could hear a faint whispering. The language was Russian. Obviously, there was someone at the minister's elbow, telling him what to say.

Now the minister was speaking in Polish again. "I am sending a car to Zürich to pick you up. I must see you without delay."

"Very well," said Andrzej, and rang off.

Something was up. Andrzej and Etienne decided to leave the hotel at once, without waiting for dusk. They had almost reached Etienne's car, parked at the back entrance, when a man in a cloth cap stepped out of the shadows. Etienne gave him a violent shove and sent him sprawling.

Through the car's rear window, Andrzej saw him trying to make a note of the number-plate as they swung crazily down the street. It must have been about an hour after this that the embassy in London started phoning me, wanting to know where I was.

Etienne took Andrzej to a friend's house outside Zürich and there they switched to another car for the journey back to the airport. He also enlarged Andrzej's bodyguard in case of trouble on the airfield. However all was quiet as he and his friends formed a protective circle around Andrzej until the plane climbed into the sky.

I MET him at the airport. We stood looking at each other through the drizzle of rain. The deep black smudges under Andrzej's eyes tore at my heart. I suddenly knew with a sense of panic that, much as he had longed for freedom, the final decision had not been lightly made. He had no story of victimization to present to the world. On the contrary, he had been showered with honours as only a Communist régime knows how to shower honours on an artist of repute—at the price of his freedom of mind.

For Andrzej this price had been too high to pay. But this protest of his, the first serious blow struck at the cultural prestige of the Communists since the final fall of the Curtain in 1949, had entailed sacrifice. The decision to leave one's birthplace where one is respected, famous and acclaimed, to leave one's home and friends for ever, cannot be easy.

Did he have any regrets? I had my answer exactly one year later when for the first time in four years he again began composing as he chose to compose, free from the domination of "experts," and when at a Promenade concert he conducted with enormous success his Sinfonia Rustica, that same symphony which the Communists had declared had "ceased to exist."

That day at the airport, as he advanced towards me through the rain, he said in English, "I've forgotten to bring my umbrella." My heart leaped for joy. He could joke. He was going to be all right. . . . THE END

"Out Of The City Of Fear" by Scarlett Panufnik will be published as a book by Hodder and Stoughton on September 27 at 16s

OPEN TO VIEW

by JAMES LEES-MILNE

Drawn by ROWLAND HILDER

Legend said there was treasure in a tomb at Blickling. These men meant to find out

HENRIETTA HOBART had a hard life, yet she never lost her love for her family home, Blickling Hall, in Norfolk, a great redbrick house with curved gables and endless passages, and she went back there whenever she could.

When Henrietta was seventeen her father, Sir Henry, was killed in a duel with a neighbour. Soon afterwards she left home to be married to Charles Howard, who was "wrong-headed, ill-tempered, obstinate, drunken, extravagant, brutal."

Her marriage was not a success. The couple were so poor that once she had to sell her hair to pay for a dinner party. Dire poverty was only averted when she was made bed-chamber-woman to the Princess of Wales, wife of the future George II.

This post led to her becoming the Prince's mistress. From then on her position at court was one of much difficulty. George II was boorish and he often snubbed her.

Once he snatched away a scarf which Mrs. Howard had arranged for the Queen. "Because you have an ugly neck yourself," he said, "you need not hide the Queen's."

Yet despite everything Mrs. Howard was one of the most cultivated women of the day. Her friends were poets, artists and politicians. She was also quite unselfseeking. Her ambitions were solely for her own family and for Blickling. The only favour she ever asked the King was an earldom for her brother, Sir John, who was made Earl of Buckinghamshire.

Blickling had been bought in 1431 by the rich Norfolk knight, Sir John Fastolph, whom Shakespeare has immortalized as Falstaff. Fastolph was ruthless and avaricious. Money was his prevailing passion and he speculated in estates. So he sold Blickling to a young man called Geoffrey Boleyn, whose grandson saw his daughter, Anne, married to Henry VIII.

In 1616 the estate was bought by Sir Henry Hobart, then Chief Justice of the Common Pleas. He rebuilt the great house which stands today and is owned by the National Trust. His grandson entertained Charles II and Catherine of Braganza at Blickling.

The second Earl of Buckinghamshire's first wife was a great beauty. When she died at twenty-nine, she bequeathed her jewels for the rebuilding of the west wing of the house. A legend persisted that only part of the jewels was sold for this purpose and the rest was buried with her. During the last war some hooligans broke into the family mausoleum in the park and prised open the Countess's sarcophagus to steal the buried treasure. They found nothing.

How to get there: Blickling is one mile north-west of Aylsham (E.R.). *Open:* State rooms and gardens: May to September, Thursdays and Sundays, 2 till 5. Gardens only: Wednesdays, 2 till 5.

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To make a *Bullet*, add simply TWO, THREE or FOUR words of apt and original comment to any of the *Examples* below. To use an incomplete *Example*, first complete it with any one word in place of dotted line—then make your *Bullet* as usual.

The Britain We Want	According To The Guide
Squeeze, Squeeze, Squeeze	Into The Bank
Union v. Union	Branded
In Our Little Garden	Slugs, Snails, Caterpillars
Proud Nation	A Snooty Lot
What The Future Holds	Good For Sonny
It's A Council House, So	A Tricky Business
Won't Work	At The School Sports
Greatest Show On Earth	Cunning As A Fox
Soft-hearted Chap	On A Sticky Wicket

Incomplete "Examples"—see instructions

After Our.....	In Grandpa's.....
Given To	Burning Up The.....
.....But Happy	Down Came The.....And

RULES 1. First Prize for best *Bullet* received. Others in order of merit; the test is of cleverness, aptness and originality.

2. Editor undertakes that all *Bullets* received shall be accorded careful consideration by competent adjudicators.

3. As entry-fee enclose P.O. as indicated on coupon. Fee submitted will be taken to cover *Bullets* in coupon order—any sent in excess will be disqualified. Plain-paper entries are allowed. Make P.O. payable to JOHN BULL, cross /& Co./, write name and address on back. Coupons must not be mutilated.

4. Entries accepted by post only and on condition that result of this Contest (in JOHN BULL dated July 28), also Editor's decision in any matter of dispute, are accepted as final and legally binding. Odhams' employees (and families) ineligible.

(See "Daily Herald" on Saturday, July 14, for early news of *Bullets* No. 2,045 result.)

POST ENTRY : "Bullets" 2,045, "John Bull," Long Acre, London, W.C.2 (Comp.)

CHIEF WINNERS—"BULLETS" No. 2,040

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In The World Market
Britannia's "Shopping-bag" Dwarfing "Stall"!

£50: Mrs. I. G. Parsons, 248 Hinckley Road, Nuneaton: PRODUCING MORE—WITHOUT PROD, PROD—AUTOMATION?

£25: F. H. Garrett, 68 Field Crescent, Harlescott, Shrewsbury: WHEN THE SHOPKEEPER BEGAN—USING SCALES AS *Ash-tray*—!

OTHER AWARDS: £10: W. A. Northcott, 8 Normandy Way, St. Budeaux, Plymouth: DRIFTING AND DREAMING—OF "HITTING SOMETHING"—BUMP! £9: Miss V. Rayner, 10 Crowther Lane, Swanland, North Ferriby, Yorks: PRODUCING MORE—COULD BE "MAGIC WAND"! £8: Mrs. M. Graham, 230 Ivy Brow, New Springs, Wigan: INVADED BY FOREIGNERS—BRITAIN—SHOWS THERE'S *Peace*! £7: A. A. South, 12 Wisbech Road, March, Cambs: BABY LASHED OUT AND—COOLED OFF IN *Font*! £6: Mrs. J. M. Page, 35 Honington Crescent, Burton Road, Lincoln: DRIFTING AND DREAMING—SKIP, TO BE "SKIPPER"! £5: W. G. Broyden, 174 Lower Road, Belvedere, Kent: BETTER LIFE—DISTANT—AS NEAREST STEEPLE! £5: Mrs. M. Hornby, 3 St. Stephen's Road, Preston, Lancs: DRIFTING AND DREAMING—GRANDMA—THAT *Was* DANCING!

For ten winners of £2 10s., see *"Bullets" Bulletin*. 50 Special Awards and 1,000 "Good Shot" Prizes have also been posted.

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